

HIGHEST HONORS

PETER BAKER

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For generations, soldiers have been honored at the White House for valor under



Staff Sgt. Ty Carter speaks during a news conference after being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in Washington, Aug. 26, 2013.

(Christopher Gregory/The New York Times)

fire. And no one questions the heroism of Staff Sgt. Ty Michael Carter, who raced through a hail of bullets to rescue a wounded comrade and helped keep Taliban fighters from overrunning a combat post in Afghanistan. But when Carter, 33, was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama on Monday, he was venerated not just for his actions on the battlefield but also for those after the shooting was over. Back in the U.S. after a war that killed too many comrades, Carter has become a symbol of the courage not only to face the enemy, but to face what comes next.

"Ty has spoken openly, with honesty and extraordinary eloquence, about his struggle with post-traumatic stress - the flashbacks, the nightmares, the anxiety, the heartache that makes it sometimes almost impossible to get through a day," Obama said before draping the medal around his neck.

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US WEIGHS OPTIONS FOR SYRIA RESPONSE



Secretary of State John Kerry speaks at the State Department in Washington, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013, about the situation in Syria. Kerry said chemical weapons were used in Syria, and accused Assad of destroying evidence.

(AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

Kerry: chemical arms attack in Syria is undeniable

MICHAEL R. GORDON

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Monday that the use of chemical weapons in attacks on civilians in Syria last week was undeniable and that the Obama administration would hold the Syrian government accountable for what he called a "moral obscenity" that had shocked the world's conscience. In some of the most strident language used yet by the administration, Kerry accused the Syrian government of cyni-

cally seeking to cover up the use of the weapons and he rejected its denial of responsibility for what he called a "cowardly crime." Kerry's remarks, in a prepared statement he read at the State Department, reinforced the administration's toughening stance on the Syria conflict, which is now well into its third year, and he suggested that the White House was moving closer to a military response in consultation with America's allies. "The indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, the killing of women and children and innocent bystanders by chemi-

cal weapons is a moral obscenity," Kerry said. "By any standard, it is inexcusable," he said. "And despite the excuses and equivocations that some have manufactured, it is undeniable." Kerry also said the Syrian government's refusal to allow immediate access to the sites attacked last Wednesday was a telling indicator that it was trying to hide responsibility. Even though a U.N. team was finally permitted by the Syrian government to investigate starting Monday, he said, the government's authorization was "too late" to be credible.

"Our sense of basic humanity is offended not only by this cowardly crime but also by the cynical attempt to cover it up," he said. Kerry spoke hours after U.N. inspectors were finally allowed access to one of the attack sites, despite shooting from unidentified snipers that disabled their convoy's lead vehicle. The inspectors still managed to visit two hospitals, interview witnesses and doctors and collect patient samples for the first time since the attack last week that claimed hundreds of lives.

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Kerry: chemical arms attack in Syria is undeniable

Continued from front

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in a statement that he had instructed his top disarmament official, Angela Kane, who was visiting Damascus, to register a "strong complaint to the Syrian government and authorities of opposition forces" to ensure the safety of the inspectors after the assault. There was no indication that any member of the inspection team had been hurt.

Ban's spokesman, Farhan Haq, told reporters at a

regular daily briefing at U.N. headquarters in New York that the assailants, who had not been identified, fired on the first vehicle in the convoy, which was "hit in its tires and its front window, ultimately it was not able to travel further."

Anti-government activists posted videos online of U.N. inspectors in blue helmets arriving in the Moadamiya area, southwest of the capital, where they were shown entering a clinic and interviewing patients.

Moadamiya is a rebel-held suburb where anti-gov-

ernment activists reported the smaller of two suspected chemical attacks last Wednesday. Videos posted then showed patients in a rebel field hospital apparently having trouble breathing.

The visit by the U.N. inspectors to the Damascus suburb, in a half-dozen vehicles escorted by Syrian security forces, came shortly after President Bashar Assad of Syria denied that his forces had used poison gas against his own citizens, and as divisions between outside powers over how to

handle the crisis showed no signs of easing.

In an interview with the Russian newspaper Izvestia, published Monday, Assad said accusations that his forces had used chemical weapons were illogical and an "outrage against common sense." He warned the United States that military intervention in Syria would bring "failure just like in all the previous wars they waged, starting with Vietnam and up to the present day."

Assad's choice of a Russian newspaper to air his views

seemed to reflect Moscow's strong support for the Syrian leader after last week's attack on the outskirts of Damascus, which claimed hundreds of lives. While Assad has said he would give weapons inspectors access to the site, the gesture has been greeted with widespread skepticism in the West, with critics saying that the offer came too late for inspectors to make an accurate assessment of what happened. The British foreign secretary, William Hague, complained Monday that access was not "unimpeded" since it was limited to a "certain number of hours." British officials also said Monday that Prime Minister David Cameron would cut short a vacation in Cornwall, in southwest England, to return to London and head a meeting of senior ministers Wednesday. His gesture seemed designed to heighten the mood of crisis as outside powers wrestle with Assad's refusal to bow to the West.

"If someone dreams about turning Syria into a puppet of the West, it simply will not happen," Assad told Izvestia. "We are an independent government, and we will battle with terrorism and we will freely build relations with those countries whom we want to."

In the interview with Izvestia, Assad said, "America has taken part in many wars but could not once achieve its political goals for which the wars were started. □"



A U.N. team leaves their hotel in a convoy, in Damascus, Syria, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013, to investigate the alleged chemical attack that killed hundreds last week in a Damascus suburb.

(AP Photo)

Iran's pick for nuclear talks carries hope of eased tensions

THOMAS ERDBRINK

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TEHRAN, Iran - Until this summer, Mohammad Javad Zarif, one of Iran's most accomplished diplomats, was an outcast, exiled from the government by ultraconservatives for working too closely with the West.

That changed with the election of the moderate president, Hassan Rouhani, in June. Now, Zarif is the country's new foreign minister and seems virtu-

ally certain to lead Iran's delegation in nuclear negotiations with the West - further indications, analysts say, that Rouhani is serious about reducing tensions with the United States and other Western countries.

"Mr. Zarif is the new face of a new policy," said Davoud Hermidas-Bavand, a professor of international relations at Allameh Tabatabaei University in Tehran, who knows Zarif personally. "Our former foreign

policy obviously did not yield any results and was clearly doomed. We need to revise our former methods and soften our stances in order to find a solution to the nuclear problem and reduce the sanctions."

Previous negotiations over Iran's nuclear program have broken down on the West's insistence that the country's government first stop enriching uranium. The Iranians have maintained just as steadfastly that they

have the right to enrich uranium for peaceful uses. Now, this diplomatic logjam may be giving way, analysts say. "We can be sure that Mr. Zarif - if he gets to handle the nuclear issue - will quickly and officially propose ideas such as Iran ending enrichment up to 20 percent as a compromise," said François Nicoullaud, a former French ambassador to Tehran who often met with Zarif. If Iran's leadership has decided to pursue

a new policy of easing tensions with the West - and that still remains to be seen - Zarif would seem the ideal person to carry it out.

For most of the past three decades, Zarif, 53, has sought to establish a working relationship between Iran and the West. But he has focused particularly on the U.S., a country he prefers to call a "rival" nation rather than "the enemy," the label preferred by Iran's hard-liners. □

Treasury claims US will hit debt limit in mid-Oct

MARCY GORDON
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew is telling Congress that the U.S. government will hit its borrowing limit in mid-October and urged lawmakers to raise it before then. Lew said in a letter to Speaker John Boehner released Monday that the government is running out of accounting maneuvers it has used to avoid hitting the \$16.7 trillion borrowing limit. He pressed Congress to act so Treasury can keep paying the government's bills. Lew said it's impossible for Treasury to predict exactly when borrowing limit will be reached. But he warns that if action isn't taken soon, the government could be left with \$50 billion in cash by mid-October. He says that wouldn't be enough to cover Social Security payments, military personnel salaries, Medicare and other programs for an "extended period." Earlier this year, Congress temporarily suspended the borrowing limit so lawmakers could focus on other budget debates. Treasury has kept the government operating for several months through its book-keeping maneuvers. A smaller deficit this year has also helped.

The government is spending more than it takes in, running up annual deficits in excess of \$1 trillion in each of the past four budget years. It has been borrowing the difference to meet its obligations. Republicans want to reduce future deficits by cutting back sharply on spending. Democrats have proposed a mix of spending cuts and tax increases, which Republicans strongly oppose. The issue awaits resolution when lawmakers return from the recess. Congress last passed legislation to increase the borrowing limit in the summer of 2011 after a months-long negotiation between President Barack Obama and top lawmakers like Boehner. □

Obama honors soldier for valor under fire, and afterward

Continued from front

But with the help of the Army, the president said, Carter received treatment and now stands as a repudiation of the stigma many soldiers feel. "Let me say it as clearly as I can to any of our troops or veterans who are watching and struggling," Obama said. "Look at this man. Look at this soldier. Look at this warrior. He's as tough as they come, and if he can find the courage and the strength to not only seek help but also to speak out about it, to take care of himself and to stay strong, then so can you." The president paid tribute to heroism in the last war even as he contemplated the next one.

The ceremony in the East Room of the White House came on a day when Obama was reviewing potential military responses to a chemical weapons attack by the Syrian government that killed hundreds of civilians.

Obama, who pulled the last U.S. troops out of Iraq and is winding down the war in Afghanistan, is not considering sending ground troops like Carter to Syria, but he is confronting the prospect of other military action in a region from which he has spent much of his presidency trying to disengage.

Carter, a married father of three from Antioch, Calif., was the fifth living member of the military to receive the Medal of Honor for ac-

ran through a 100-yard gantlet of enemy fire to aid the defense of the outpost and, wounded by shrapnel, killed several attack-

later died of his injuries, he said, "I will hear his plea for help for the rest of my life." Carter used the occasion of his medal award cere-



President Barack Obama awards Staff Sgt. Ty Carter the Medal of Honor during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Aug. 26, 2013. Carter was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions during a battle in Afghanistan in 2009.

(Christopher Gregory/The New York Times)

tions in the Afghanistan War. He was the second to receive it for actions in the battle of Kamdesh recounted in a book by Jake Tapper of CNN, "The Outpost: An Untold Story of American Valor." Obama honored former Sgt. Clinton Romesha in February. When Combat Outpost Keating, manned by about 50 U.S. troops, was attacked from all sides by about 300 Taliban fighters early on the morning of Oct. 3, 2009, Carter rushed in. He twice

ers. He ran out again into a storm of fire to a wounded colleague, stanching the bleeding, placed a tourniquet on his leg and carried him through the shots to safety. Speaking to reporters on the White House driveway after Monday's ceremony, Carter openly acknowledged the horror of the day. "Only those closest to me can see the scars that come from seeing good men take their last breath," he said. Of the wounded soldier, who

mony to address the American people. "Ladies and gentlemen, please, take the time to learn about the invisible wounds," he said. "Know that a soldier or veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress is one of the most passionate, committed men or women you'll ever meet. Know that they are not damaged; they are simply burdened with living when others did not. Know that they - we - are not defeated, never defeated. □

Witness: Man accused of killing Ga. baby hid gun

KATE BRUMBACK

MARIETTA, Ga. (AP) — A man accused of fatally shooting a baby in coastal Georgia hid a gun at a relative's apartment the day after the slaying, and his mother and sister came to get it, a woman who lives in the home said Monday. Danielle Williams testified that De'Marquise Elkins came to her home March 22, the day after 13-month-old Antonio Santiago was shot to death in his stroller, and asked if he could hide a gun under a loveseat. Later that day, Elkins' mother and sister came by the apartment and left with the gun, Williams said.

Williams' father-in-law, Ronald Elkins, who said he's a third cousin of De'Marquise Elkins, testified he was sleeping that morning and was awakened by noise. He went downstairs and found Karimah and Sabrina Elkins — De'Marquise Elkins' mother and sister, respectively — lifting the loveseat and pulling out a gun. Concerned for his young grandchild in the home, Ronald Elkins took the revolver, emptied the bullets and returned the gun and bullets to Karimah Elkins, he said.

Prosecutors say 18-year-old De'Marquise Elkins and an accomplice, 15-year-old

Dominique Lang, stopped Antonio's mother, Sherry West, as she returned home from the post office with her son. Prosecutors say the older teen pointed a small .22-caliber revolver at West and demanded money. West did not immediately hand over her purse, and the child was shot. West was shot in her leg, and another bullet grazed her ear. The killing in the port city of Brunswick drew national attention, and the trial was moved to the Atlanta suburb of Marietta because of extensive publicity. Elkins faces life in prison if convicted of murder. At the time of the shooting he was

17, too young to face the death penalty under Georgia law.

Prosecutors have said information from Elkins' mother and sister led investigators to a pond where they found the revolver. Karimah Elkins is on trial alongside her son on charges of evidence tampering and lying to police. Elkins' sister also was charged with evidence tampering. Willie Merrell, who described himself as a good friend of Karimah Elkins, testified that he picked up Karimah and Sabrina Elkins the day after the shooting and took them to a fishing pond where he catches bass. □



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Wildfire closing in on US Bay area's water source

BRIAN SKOLOFF
TRACIE CONE
Associated Press
TUOLUMNE CITY, California
(AP) — A raging wildfire

in Yosemite National Park rained ash on the reservoir that is the chief source of San Francisco's famously pure drinking water, and utility officials Monday scrambled to send more water toward the metropolitan area before it becomes tainted.

Nearly 3,700 firefighters battled the approximately 230-square-mile (600-sq. kilometer) blaze, the biggest wildfire on record in California's Sierra Nevada. They reported modest progress, saying the fire was 15 percent contained. Utility officials monitored the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir for clarity and used a massive new \$4.6 billion gravity-operated pipeline system to move water quickly to reservoirs closer to San Francisco. The Hetch Hetchy supplies water to 2.6 million people

in the Bay area, 150 miles (240 kilometers) away. "We're taking advantage that the water we're receiving is still of good qual-

ity," said Harlan Kelly Jr., general manager of the city's Public Utilities Commission. "We're bringing

down as much water as possible and replenishing all of the local reservoirs." At the same time, utility officials gave assurances

raining onto the Hetch Hetchy has not sunk as far as the intake valves, which are about halfway down the 300-foot (90-meter)

customers if problems are detected. That could cost more. On Monday the fire was still several miles away from the steep granite canyon where the reservoir is nestled, but several spot fires were burning closer, and firefighters were protecting hydroelectric transmission lines and other utility facilities.

"Obviously we're paying close attention to the city's water supply," said Glen Stratton, an operations chief on the fire suppression team. Power generation at the reservoir was shut down last week so that firefighters would not be imperiled by live wires. San Francisco is buying replacement power from other sources to run City Hall and other municipal buildings.

It has been at least 17 years since fire ravaged the northernmost stretch of Yosemite that is under siege. □



Two firefighters watch trees burn while battling the Rim Fire near Yosemite National Park, Calif., on Monday, Aug. 26, 2013. Crews working to contain one of California's largest-ever wildfires gained some ground Monday against the flames threatening San Francisco's water supply, several towns near Yosemite National Park and historic giant sequoias.

(AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

O'Shaughnessy Dam. Utility officials said that the ash is non-toxic but that the city will begin filtering water for

Internal probe: No fraud at BP claims center in US

MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
Associated Press
NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The

head of security for the administrator of BP's multibillion-dollar settlement with Gulf Coast residents and businesses says an internal probe of alleged misconduct by an employee of a Mobile, Alabama, claims center hasn't turned up any evidence of fraud.

BP said it received a tip in July that someone who worked at the Mobile office helped people submit fraudulent claims in exchange for some of the settlement money.

But David Welker, a former FBI supervisor who now works for court-supervised claims administrator Patrick Juneau, said in a letter dated Aug. 22 that his investigation found no evidence of fraud in any of the claims handled by the

employee.

BP cited the employee's alleged misconduct in its Aug. 5 request for a federal judge to temporarily suspend all settlement payments. U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier rejected a similar request by BP in July, but he hasn't ruled yet on the company's renewed bid to suspend payments. In a court filings this week, Juneau and two of the plaintiffs' attorneys who brokered the settlement with BP said the company hasn't presented any evidence that any claim was improperly calculated or paid.

"There is not even an argument, much less an evidentiary showing, to support the injunction of the entire Settlement Program," the lawyers, Stephen Herman and James Roy, wrote Sunday.

In a court filing Monday, Juneau's lawyers said BP's request to suspend settlement payments is based on "speculation and uncorroborated inferences."

The company's "repeated attacks on Mr. Juneau and his office are not only specious but appear to have a purpose of interfering with Mr. Juneau's ability to perform his court-appointed duties," they wrote.

In his letter to a BP official, Welker said the Mobile employee accused of misconduct has helped 124 people. All of those claims were placed on hold.

The employee's mother filed a claim, but she denied any wrongdoing and withdrew it, Welker said.

"We have found no evidence to support the allegation of fraud pertaining to any of these claims," Welker wrote. "In fact, we

have learned that (the employee) referred 32 of these claimants for fraud review by the (settlement program), leading to the detection of a significant multi-claimant scheme."

In July, Juneau suspended the Mobile employee and another accused of accessing claims data for that person.

Welker said a subsequent examination of the employees' computers and emails revealed no evidence of fraud.

BP also has said it recently discovered that two lawyers who have served as "appeals panelists" for the settlement program apparently had conflicts of interest. The lawyers, who have ruled on appeals of disputed settlement awards, were partners at law firms that have represented claimants and filed

claims of their own to be compensated.

Herman and Roy, the plaintiffs' attorneys, said the appeals panelists are supervised by the court, not Juneau.

"The notion that the Claims Administrator had an obligation or failed to 'police' the Appeals Panelists is absurd," they wrote.

On July 2, Barbier appointed former FBI Director Louis Freeh to conduct an independent investigation of the settlement program, including possible misconduct by a lawyer who worked on Juneau's staff.

Lionel H. Sutton III is accused of receiving a portion of settlement proceeds for claims he referred to a law firm before he went to work for Juneau. Sutton, who resigned from Juneau's staff on June 21, has denied the allegations. □

Emotional testimony as jury weighs Hasan's fate



In this courtroom sketch, Angela Rivera, wife of Maj. Libardo Caraveo who was one of 13 people killed in the Fort Hood shootings, appears on the witness stand in a courtroom sketch during the sentencing phase for Maj. Nidal Hasan, Monday, August 26, 2013, in Fort Hood, Texas.

(AP Photo/Brigitte Woosley)

**MICHAEL GRACZYK
NOMAAN MERCHANT
Associated Press**

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP) — Survivors of the 2009 shooting rampage at Fort Hood and relatives of those killed testified Monday during the final phase of Maj. Nidal Hasan's trial. Prosecutors hope the emotional testimony — from sobbing widows, distraught parents and paralyzed soldiers — helps convince jurors to impose a rare military death sentence on Hasan, who was convicted last week of killing 13 people and wounding more than 30 others at the Texas military base. The sentencing phase also will be Hasan's last chance to tell jurors what he's spent the last four years telling the military, judges and

journalists: that the killing of unarmed American soldiers preparing to deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan was necessary to protect Muslim insurgents. But whether he plans to address jurors remains unclear. Staff Sgt. Patrick Ziegler was among the first to testify, telling jurors how he was shot four times and underwent emergency surgery that removed about 20 percent of his brain. Doctors initially expected him to die or remain in a vegetative state. Shoua Her wiped away tears as she recalled how she and her husband, Pfc. Kham Xiong, talked about growing old together and having more children. Now, she said, their children know their slain father only through memories and

stories.

"We had talked about how excited we were to purchase our first home. We talked about vacations and places we wanted to go visit. And all that was stripped away from me," she said.

As she testified, one juror, a male officer, fought back tears.

The hearing ended for the day after a dozen people testified. Hasan asked for three recesses through the day, and the judge granted two of them.

Other widows, mothers, children and siblings of the slain also are expected this week to tell the jury of 13 high-ranking military officers about their loved ones

and describe the pain of living without them.

What they won't be allowed to talk about are their feelings toward Hasan or what punishment they think he deserves.

Hasan, an American-born Muslim, has admitted carrying out the attack and showed no reaction when he was found guilty. □

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Guards help escort Chicago kids to new schools

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Thousands of Chicago children whose schools were shuttered last spring walked to new ones on the first day of school Monday under the watchful eye of police officers and newly hired safety guards there to provide protection as the kids crossed unfamiliar streets — many of them gang boundaries.

No incidents of trouble were reported, police said. While that didn't surprise parents and grandparents, they said they were still concerned that the city's obvious show of first-day force won't keep their children safe in the weeks and months to come. "I think it's just show-and-tell right now," said Annie

Stovall, who walked her granddaughter, 9-year-old Kayla Porter, to Gresham Elementary School, which

down the road, let's see what's going to happen." The preparation and show of force shows what's at

last spring in the hopes of improving academic performance and saving millions of dollars. About 12,000 of the district's 400,000 students were affected by the closures.

For months, parents, teachers and community activists have warned that forcing children to pass through some of the city's more impoverished and dangerous neighborhoods — where some already walking in the middle of the street to avoid being ambushed by gang members — to get to school puts them at undue risk.

Statistics suggest those concerns are valid. An analysis of Chicago crime data by WBEZ-FM found that in 2013, there have been 133 shootings and 38

homicides in and around areas that have been newly marked as Safe Passage routes. bAnd if the attention Chicago received after a 15-year-old honor student was killed about a mile (two kilometers) from President Barack Obama's home in January is any indication, there is no doubt a similar media firestorm will occur if a child is caught in gang crossfire on the way to or from school. With the hope of preventing problems, the financially strapped city hired 600 workers at a rate of \$10 an hour to supplement a Safe Passage program that has existed since 2009, — launched the same year a Chicago honors student's beating death was videotaped. □



Chicago Police patrol the neighborhood as Crystal Stoval delivers her niece Kayla Porter from their south side home to Gresham Elementary School on the first day of classes Monday, Aug. 26, 2013 in Chicago.

(AP Photos/M. Spencer Green)

is about five blocks farther from home than Kayla's previous South Side school. "Five, six weeks

stake for Chicago Public Schools, the nation's third-largest school district, after it closed almost 50 schools



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US Financial Front:

Bust to boom: Can strippers save Atlantic City?

WAYNE PARRY
Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey

(AP) — What if, after seven years of plunging casino revenues and fleeing customers, Atlantic City's real problem was this: People are wearing too much clothing? The first strip club inside an Atlantic City casino ever in 35 years of legal gambling is about to open in the New Jersey seaside town. Scores, the famous New York strip club, will open a satellite establishment inside the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort next month. It will be the most audacious adult offering in an Atlantic City casino, though it's not the first: Revel has offered the Royal Jelly burlesque show since it opened, the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa hosts a burlesque show every Thursday night, and dancers in bras and panties are common on gambling floors, including at the Tropicana Casino and Resort and the Showboat Casino Hotel.

"We feel this is the third leg of the Atlantic City triangle: gambling, alcohol and adult entertainment," said Bob Gans, the club's managing partner. "It's a natural." Since 2006, when the first casino opened in Pennsylvania and began taking away business that had gone to New Jersey for three decades, Atlantic City has been struggling with new competition popping up all around it. Revenue has fallen from \$5.2 billion that year to just over \$3 billion last year, and thousands of jobs have been lost in a decline that shows no signs of ending.

In addition to family-friendly attractions like a revamped Steel Pier amusement park,

the return of the Miss America pageant and free outdoor light shows on Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City has been looking for other ways to separate people and their money. The seaside resort has a century-old reputation as an adult playground, so it's somewhat surprising it took this long for strippers to make their way inside the gambling halls. Gans is investing \$25 million in the newest Scores, which will open Sept. 12 with five private VIP rooms, 11 stripper poles and an ultra-VIP room for celebrities and high-rollers. Cover charges will range from \$10 to \$30. The club's Diamond Dollars, which cash-strapped customers can charge to their credit cards, come with a steep 20 percent markup: \$100 worth of club dollars costs \$120. Patrons and employees will have to behave; New Jersey laws governing casinos prohibit total nudity. In approving the club in December 2011, the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement issued a ruling that bordered on an anatomy lesson, governing in explicit detail what can be shown and what needs to stay covered. In short, dancers may strip down only to a G-string and pasties, small fabric patches that cover the nipples. Lap dances are prohibited, as is any simulation of sexual activity.

While Las Vegas is known for its racy offerings, there are no strip clubs inside any Sin City casinos. Several offer topless stage shows and topless pools, and strip clubs regularly offer free transportation from anywhere near the Strip, including casinos. □



Kathy Kuhns of Lancaster, Pa., smokes a cigarette and plays a slot machine in a large smoking area at Revel Casino Hotel in Atlantic City. The first strip club inside an Atlantic City casino ever in 35 years of legal gambling is about to open in the New Jersey seaside town.

(Jessica Kourkounis/The New York Times)



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Palestinian officials: round of talks halted after clash

M. DARAGHMEH
Associated Press

QALANDIA REFUGEE CAMP, West Bank (AP) — Palestinian officials said they called off a planned round of peace talks Monday after Israeli soldiers killed three protesters during clashes following an arrest raid in the West Bank.

But in comments that suggested the meeting had gone ahead as planned, State Department deputy spokeswoman Marie Harf said that "no meetings have been canceled. We've been clear that the two parties are engaged in serious and sustained negotiations."

Israeli officials refused to comment.

The violence, the deadliest incident in the area in years, dealt a new blow

to U.S.-led peace efforts, which resumed late last month after a nearly five-year break. Palestinian officials have accused the Israelis of stonewalling and using the process as a cover to build new Jewish settlements. The deaths of Palestinians further soured the atmosphere.

It was not known when talks will resume, but Palestinian officials said the break was expected to be brief. They spoke anonymously as they were not authorized to talk to media.

Monday's clashes broke out when Israeli forces entered the Qalandia refugee camp, just outside of Jerusalem, on an overnight arrest raid. Shai Hakimi, a spokesman for the paramilitary border police, said hundreds of Palestinians



Palestinian mourners carry the body of one of three slain Palestinians, during their funeral procession in the Qalandia refugee camp, at the outskirts of the West Bank town of Ramallah, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013.

poured into the streets and hurled firebombs, concrete blocks and rocks at officers. The Israeli military said soldiers rushed to the scene

to provide backup and opened fire after they felt their lives were in "imminent danger."

An official at a Ramallah

(AP Photo/Majdi Mohammed)

hospital confirmed three deaths and more than a dozen wounded. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

Hatim Khatib, whose brother Youssef was arrested in the raid, told The Associated Press that undercover troops dressed in civilian clothes arrived at their home at 4:30 a.m. looking for the brother.

"After half an hour we started hearing shooting from the soldiers inside our house, and then people started throwing stones at them," he said.

Youssef was arrested after he returned from morning prayers at 7:00 a.m., he said.

He said he didn't know why his brother was the only one arrested but said Youssef had spent time in Israeli jail for throwing rocks and was released three years ago. The Israeli military would not say why he was wanted.□

Filipinos stage anti-corruption protest in Manila

© 2013 New York Times

MANILA, Philippines - Tens of thousands of Filipinos protested in Manila on Monday, outraged over accusations that an estimated \$141 million in public money had been diverted into the coffers of politicians and their associates. The peaceful four-hour rally was fueled in part by photographs posted on social media sites by the daughter of one of the suspects in the case, showing an extravagance that earned the young woman the title "the new Imelda," after the free-spending wife of the longtime dictator Ferdinand Marcos. President Benigno S. Aquino III, the fifth president since Mar-

cos, has made fighting corruption a hallmark of his three-year-old administration and has received accolades from international organizations for improving government accountability. But scandals have persisted over extrajudicial killings by the police, sexual harassment by diplomats, and extortion and bribery within government agencies. The one that drove protesters into the streets Monday involved accusations in a government audit that members of Congress worked with associates to divert discretionary in public funding to sham organizations and questionable projects in return for bribes. The National Bureau of In-

vestigation has issued an arrest warrant for a Manila businesswoman, Janet Lim-Napoles, who is suspected of having facilitated some of the corrupt transactions with lawmakers. Her passport has been revoked and she is the subject of a nationwide search. Lim-Napoles denied the accusations in news media interviews conducted before the warrant was issued, but public anger grew with the circulation of the photographs showing the lavish living of her daughter, Jeane Lim-Napoles.

There have been a series of corruption cases involving a variety of government agencies this year.

Despite the scandals, Aquino

has received praise from the World Bank, financial rating agencies and others for his efforts to combat the country's persistent corruption. Vincent Lazatin, executive director of the Transparency and Accountability Network, an anti-corruption group, said that high-profile convictions did little to stop the rampant bribery and extortion within Philippine government agencies, including the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the police. Lazatin said Aquino faced an uphill battle in trying to fix government institutions that had retained corrupt practices through decades of different presidencies.□

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Egyptian Islamist groups seek truce with military

MAGGIE MICHAEL
Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Two former militant groups offered to call off street protests if the government agrees to ease its pressure on Islamists, a move that underscores how a onetime strong Islamist movement is now bowing to an unprecedented crackdown by security authorities.

The proposal comes after the military rounded up hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood leaders and other Islamists in the wake of the country's worst bout of violence, which followed the Aug. 14 clearing of two sprawling sit-in camps housing protesters calling for the reinstatement of ousted President Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's first freely elected leader.

Trial opened for the Brotherhood's supreme leader Mohammed Badie and two other senior officials on Sunday on charges of inciting the murder of anti-Morsi protesters on June 30, the anniversary of his inauguration when millions took to the street to call on him to step down. The first day of their trial coincided with

the retrial of ex-Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, who was ousted in a popular uprising in 2011, over similar charges.

Critics say the truce proposal reflects cracks within the Islamist alliance led by the Brotherhood, with much of its leadership either imprisoned or on the run.

"They want to lift pressure on their groups and jump off the Muslim Brotherhood boat that is sinking right now," said veteran journalist and analyst Makram Mohammed Ahmed. "Everyone is searching for a way out but this too late."

Morsi supporters previously have insisted on the reversal of three moves by the military — Morsi's return to power, the lifting of the suspension of Islamist-drafted constitution and the restoration of the only legislative council under Morsi, as three preconditions to talks.

However Islamic Jihad leader Mohammed Abu Samra told The Associated Press that the proposed truce has no "red lines."

"We are paving the way for talks," Abu Samra said



Lawyers for Muslim Brotherhood leaders, who were arrested over the last month as part of a massive crackdown on the Brotherhood, appear in a courtroom in downtown Cairo, Egypt. Two former militant groups in Egypt offered to call off street protests if the government agrees to ease its pressure on Islamists.

(AP Photo/Ravy Shaker)

by telephone. "We can't hold talks while we are at the points of swords in the midst of killings and crack-

downs." He said the groups were "extending their hands" to avoid a bloodier confrontation with the

military, which he accuses of "defaming" the Brotherhood in the media and mosques. □

Iran, Oman sign for gas pipeline

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran and its southern Arab neighbor have signed a draft agreement to build a pipeline for the export of Iranian natural gas.

Iran's official IRNA news agency says the memorandum of understanding was signed between Iran's Oil Minister, Bijan Namdar Zanganeh and his Omani counterpart in Tehran Monday. The report did not provide further details but said the two sides agreed to begin construction of the

pipeline "in a short period of time."

The deal comes as Omani Sultan Qaboos is visiting Iran for discussions focusing on bilateral and international affairs. Qaboos' visit has raised hopes that Omani mediation could help ease tensions between Iran and Western powers over Tehran's disputed nuclear program.

Iran has the world's largest gas reserves after Russia and is a major gas exporter. □

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China says economy stabilizing after slowdown

BEIJING (AP) — China's government tried Monday to reassure companies and its public about the economy's health, saying growth is stabilizing after a lengthy decline and should hit the official target of 7.5 percent for the year.

The announcement by the chief spokesman for the Cabinet's statistics agency was part of official efforts to defuse unease about the country's deepest slump since the 2008 global crisis. "There are growing signs of stabilization and also of further growth," said the spokesman, Sheng Laiyun, at a news briefing. "We are confident we can hit our full-year growth target."

Sheng gave no updated data but cited previously released figures that showed industrial production and other parts of the economy improved in July. Economic growth fell to 7.5 percent in the three months ending in June after declining steadily for 10 straight quarters. Sheng said it was the longest such slowdown since China's market-style reforms began three decades ago. The International Monetary Fund and private sector analysts have cut this year's growth forecasts for China, though to a still healthy level of close to 8 percent. Some analysts say

growth could dip below 7 percent in coming quarters. The slowdown was largely due to government efforts to reduce reliance on trade and investment that drove

employment, which could fuel political tensions, but the government says the economy is still generating new jobs. Sheng also downplayed concern about debts owed by lo-

banking industry. An audit last year found local governments ran up debts of 10.7 trillion yuan (\$1.6 trillion) over the preceding decade, equal to about one-quarter of

banking industry. An audit last year found local governments ran up debts of 10.7 trillion yuan (\$1.6 trillion) over the preceding decade, equal to about one-quarter of



People take the escalator at the financial district Monday, Aug. 26, 2013 in Shanghai, China's financial hub. China's government says growth in the world's second-largest economy is showing signs of stabilizing after a lengthy decline.

the past decade's boom and nurture more self-sustaining growth based on domestic consumption. Still, the downturn has been deeper than forecast, due to unexpectedly weak global demand for Chinese goods. That raised concern about higher un-

cal governments that borrowed heavily over the past decade, in part to pay for building projects under Beijing's stimulus in response to the 2008 crisis. Some analysts worry the economy could suffer if local governments default, hurting the state-owned

China's annual economic output. Sheng said some local governments have paid down their debts while others are rolling out plans to manage them. "We are monitoring the situation carefully and right now the issue is under control," he said. □

(AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

Brazil: Silva wants party's recognition

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A Brazilian politician who opinion polls indicate could seriously challenge President Dilma Rousseff's re-election bid next year initiated on Monday the process to have her party legally recognized.

Marina Silva and fellow members of her Sustainability Network party delivered a petition for the party's legal recognition to Brazil's Electoral Tribunal. Recognition of the party is required for her to run for the presidency next year under its banner. Under Brazilian law, the court must receive 492,000 voter signatures validated by notaries. The party turned in more than 637,000 signatures but fewer than half of them have been validated. Notaries across the country are examining the others and are expected to send the court signatures as they are approved. The court has until Oct. 5 to legally recognize the party so Silva can run in next year's presidential race, meaning about 188,000 additional signatures must be validated before then. Speaking to reporters, Silva said she hoped the party would be legally recognized, because "that's the hope of thousands and thousands of people in the whole country." Opinion polls suggest Silva, a former environment minister under Rousseff's predecessor, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, has emerged stronger from the mass nationwide protests that swept the country in June and saw the popularity ratings of several top politicians plummet. While Rousseff was not directly targeted by protesters. □

Dutch Cabinet:

Shale gas reserves can be safely exploited

AMSTERDAM (AP) — The Dutch government is trying to allay environmental and safety concerns about extracting the country's shale gas reserves, saying an independent study has found that the resources can be exploited

safely.

Economic Affairs minister Henk Kamp said Monday the study by engineering group Witteveen & Bos found current safety and environmental laws were sufficient to cover any risks and test drilling is necessary

to determine the potential importance of the resource for the Dutch economy. This fall,

Parliament will debate whether test drilling should be given the go-ahead, with the swing vote likely to be the center-left Labor

Party, which has shifted its position on the merits of shale gas several times. A 2011 attempt at test drilling in Netherlands in the eastern city of Bontel foundered over legal challenges and local opposition. □

Colombia, FARC resume talks after brief pause



Ivan Marquez, chief negotiator for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, speaks to journalists as fellow FARC members Ruben Zamora, right, Ricardo Tellez, second from left, and Jesus Santrich, far left, look on during the continuation of peace talks with Colombia's government in Havana, Cuba, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013.

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

rebels briefly walked away from the table last week. The two sides are still in disagreement on the issue behind the time-out: whether to call an assembly to rewrite the constitution if a peace deal is reached. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, says a constitutional assembly is necessary. President Juan Manuel Santos insists that that will not happen, and is proposing a national referendum on an eventual peace pact instead. Still, the FARC said Monday that it would not abandon negotiations. "Despite the circumstances the FARC will remain at the table, faithful to the commitment to seek peace for Colombia through all

means," the rebels said in a statement read to journalists by negotiator Ivan Marquez, whose legal name is Luciano Marin Arango.

The FARC announced Friday that it would take a pause from the talks to study Santos' referendum proposal, and said Monday that the issue must still be negotiated.

"Let it be clear once and for all that there will be no submission by the FARC to any legal framework with unilateral designs," Marquez said.

The FARC, formed in the 1960s, is the oldest active guerrilla army in the Americas.

Peace talks have been taking place in Cuba since last year. □

HAVANA (AP) — Negotiators from the Colombian government and the country's biggest guerrilla army resumed peace talks in Havana on Monday after the

Mexico: Toll rises in migrant train accident

RODRIGO SOBERANES SANTIN
Associated Press
CHONTALPA, México (AP) — Hundreds of Central Americans riding atop a cargo train in hopes of getting to the United States were being threatened and extorted by armed men before the train derailed and killed at least six, survivors told The Associated Press.

Many who had sneaked onto the roof of the train known as "The Beast" were thrown loose when eight of its 12 cars derailed as it hauled tons of metal junk through a remote, swampy stretch of southern Mexico, witnesses said. At least some of the dead were trapped because they had tied themselves to the train to avoid slipping as they rode between cars. Witness accounts offered a close-up look at the horrifying conditions faced by the tens of thousands of Central Americans who cross Mexico in increasing numbers in hopes of finding work in the U.S., even as

Mexican migration slows. Gangs of armed men prowl the train line, robbing, kidnapping, extorting and raping those trying to cross Mexico. Hundreds squeeze together atop the train. Others ride between cars for lack of space, or to obtain shelter from the rain and wind. "Those are the ones who died," Jose Hector Alfonso Pacheco, a 48-year-old Honduran, told The Associated Press in a shelter where Mexican authorities were housing dozens of the estimated 250 who had been riding on the train. Rescue workers were moving tons of wreckage and junk with heavy equipment Monday and expected to find more bodies, though not in the massive numbers first feared after the accident. At least five migrants suffered grave injuries, with dozens of others less seriously hurt. Mexican authorities said the accident victims could stay in Mexico legally for a year and apply for citizenship if they wanted. □

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Argentina airline unions threaten strike over LAN

A. CALATYRAVA
Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentine airline unions are threatening to strike Thursday if the government goes ahead with plans to evict the local subsidiary of Latin America's biggest carrier from its Buenos Aires airport hangar.

port in downtown Buenos Aires. LATAM says Argentina's government wants to undermine the company's competitive advantage against money-losing state-owned Aerolineas Argentinas. Unions say more than 1,000 LAN employees could

lose their jobs if the eviction goes through. The Argentine APTA and Atcpea unions, whose members include airplane technicians, flight attendants and ground crews, warned on Monday that its members will strike on the eviction deadline. "We've determined a nationwide stoppage for all airlines — Aerolineas Argentinas, LAN, Andes and Sol — that will affect in-

Aerolineas Argentinas flies to most of the country's cities and covers international routes including Madrid, Barcelona, Miami and New York. Sol has flights within Argentina and Uruguay, while Andes has cargo-only routes. LAN now has 10 planes

expires in 2013. Aerolineas also has expanded its service, but continues to bleed money despite government subsidies that keep most of its ticket prices below what LAN charges. Many passengers prefer LAN because it has a better on-time record and has fewer delays due to strikes and other labor problems. Flag-waving union members blocked the road leading to Aeroparque on Monday. LAN Argentina, meanwhile, went to court to try to block the regulator's decision. "We want to keep flying in Argentina and that's why we need our hangar in Aeroparque," LAN said in a statement published by local newspapers. The government says the eviction won't affect the company's services and LAN will be allowed to "continue its operations to and from the airport without risking operational security or jobs." The conflict with Argentina's government is the latest setback for LATAM, which was formed when Chile's LAN took over Brazil's TAM airlines last year. The company announced a quarterly loss of \$330 million last week due largely to currency fluctuations in Brazil, and it was fined \$1 million by Canada in a price-fixing case involving South American cargo shipments.



A LAN airplane sits parked on the tarmac at Jorge Newbery Airport in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

(AP Photo/Natacha Pisarenko)

nos Aires airport hangar. Regulators have given LATAM's LAN Argentina until month's end to vacate its hangar at Aeroparque air-

lose their jobs if the eviction goes through. The Argentine APTA and Atcpea unions, whose members include airplane techni-

international flights," APTA union leader Ricardo Cirielli told reporters, listing the airlines that operate at Aeroparque.

serving 14 Argentine cities. It says it will have to stop flying domestically in Argentina without the maintenance hangar. The company pays \$20,000 a month in rent on the building under a contract that

Starbucks to open its first store in Bogota, Colombia

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Starbucks says it will open its first cafe in Colombia, where the popular Juan Valdez chain has a very firm foothold. The Seattle-based chain says the Bogota store will open in the first half of 2014 and be operated through a joint venture between the company's Latin American franchisee, Alsea, and the food company Grupo Nutresa. Starbucks says it has "aggressive plans" to open

cafes across Colombia over the next five years. CEO Howard Schultz says Starbucks has discussed with Colombia's coffee federation increasing its use of Colombian coffee worldwide by about 20 percent over the next three years. The federation is a partner in the Juan Valdez chain, which has more than 225 shops, mostly in Colombia. Starbucks says it has more than 650 stores in Latin America.

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Trading and Tropical Bottling will be displaying their wine portfolios and you will be able to taste their different wine selection. Tickets will be \$45 per person including service charge & BBO and will be available at the concierge desk at The Westin Resort & Casino, Aruba starting August 23, 2013. Come and enjoy these spectacular events, Live Cooking Competition, tasting great food, excellent wines and have fun with live entertainment. □



& Casino, Aruba starting August 23, 2013. The evening will consist of a 3 course dinner prepared by our Celebrity Chefs. Each course will be served with 4 different wines, which will be provided by our partners Aruba Trading, Pepia Est., Romar Trading and Tropical Bottling. Of these 4 wines you will be the judge



PALM BEACH - The Westin Resort & Casino Aruba presents their annual Festival and it will be taking place on the 12th and 13th of September 2013. On the agenda for Thursday September 12, 2013, for the first time ever Aruba will have an Iron Chef and Iron Sommelier competition between local celebrity Chefs. Competing Chefs are Scott Scheurman from Aqua Grill, Urvin Croes from White Modern Cuisine and Erwin Husken from Screaming

Eagle. They will receive a mystery basket of 4 items which they will then have a pre-determined amount of time to prepare an appetizer, main course and dessert. They will present their creations to the Judges who will have the privilege of selecting the first IRON CHEF of Aruba. Tickets will be \$69 per person including service charge & BBO and will be available at the concierge desk at The Westin Resort



Marriott Aruba introduces "GreatRoom" concept to local press



PALM BEACH - Last Friday the Aruba Marriott team invited a selective group of the local media to introduce Marriott's new concept the "GreatRoom". The new innovative GreatRoom concept is to meet the needs of today's business travelers - allowing them to become more productive in an environment where they can meet, gather, "chill" and dine in comfort. The press was welcomed with a "Patron Mojito" cocktail which was a big hit. Led under project leader of the GreatRoom's supervision Mariette Wentink the GreatRoom team made sure the media tried the new food offerings and premium cocktails on the menu. With the introduction of the 5|10|20 menu, created by Executive Sous Chef Romeo Panacino, guests can enjoy simple, delicious food offerings, prepared within 5, 10 or 20 minutes for a single diner

or to share among each other. The menu includes red tuna niscoise salad, trio sliders, bruschetta, ceviche, jerk chicken flatbread, edamame and a sushi menu from Ketsu Sushi bar. The GreatRoom offers complimentary wifi for guests and a daily Happy Hour 5:30 - 7:30 pm with a two for \$10 special for flavored martinis. The Miller Lite Draft 10 oz. special for \$3.50 is available daily from 1:00 - 3:00 pm and 5:30 - 7:30 pm. For the night cap lover, the GreatRoom offers a special Happy Hour from 10:00 pm - midnight two for \$10 special Aruba Ariba and Cosmopolitan. Live entertainment is available Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Aruba Marriott Resort invites everyone to the GreatRoom, where you can meet for social gatherings or small business meetings over cocktails and bites. □

Beauty On The Beach

Katie Howard

She is from Cleveland, Ohio, and it's her first time in Aruba. She loves the Beach and the local people. She is staying at the Radisson Beach Resort.

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KvK Auditorium. Featured speakers for the event are Gijs Hiltermann and Monica Grummels (Interpoint B.V.). The lecture will be held in Dutch language, and entrance is free. Registration is mandatory and attendees will be registered on a first-come, first-served basis as seating capacity is limited. You may apply by sending an email to businessinfo@aruba-chamber.com, mentioning your name and phone number. □

Loyal visitors to Aruba honored at the Hyatt Resort



PALM BEACH - Recently, ATA representative Marouska Heyliger had the great pleasure of honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates. These certificates are a way to say "Masha Danki" for continuously choosing

Aruba as a favorite vacation destination. The titles are as following: 10+ years "Distinguished Visitor" and 20+ years "Goodwill Ambassador". The honorees are as following: Goodwill Ambassadors Patricia and Eddy Ladd,

Alexia Ladd and Diana Amato from New Jersey. Honoring took place at the Hyatt. The family Ladd and Amato love coming to the island for the Beaches, Great Food and Wonderful People. □



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CASINO AND SHOPS



Adam Scott, of Australia, holds the trophy after winning The Barclays golf tournament on Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013, in Jersey City, N.J.
Associated Press

A big win for Scott, and a long way to go

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer
JERSEY CITY, New Jersey (AP) — Two snapshots from Liberty National could illustrate the fortunes and future at the top of the world golf ranking. One was of Tiger Woods dropping to his hands and knees with back pain after hitting a shot so far left that it landed in a pond on the other side of an adjacent fairway. The other was of Masters champion Adam Scott swinging his driver, a beautiful blend of balance, rhythm and power. Scott went on to win The Barclays, partly because of his bogey-free 66 Sunday, mostly because the other contenders fell apart down the stretch. No apologies were necessary. Woods has won plenty of tournaments that way. "I feel like I've been given a bit of a gift," Scott said. "But I'll take it."

Continued on page 22

U.S. Open

Venus Williams upsets Flipkens

RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Venus Williams had been 14-0 in the first round of the U.S. Open, though she never had to face an opponent ranked in the top 30 at that stage.

Williams was usually the seeded player, but after two years of illness and injury, the seven-time major champion was the one pulling the upset Monday when she defeated Wimbledon semifinalist Kirsten Flipkens.

Her ranking down to No. 60, Williams beat the 12th-seeded Flipkens 6-1, 6-2 for one of her biggest wins since she pulled out of this tournament two years ago because of Sjogren's syndrome, an autoimmune disease.

"For me, I stay positive because I know I can play great tennis," Williams said. "Sometimes you just have to go through more than what you want to go through. Sometimes you have to have losses. When I had losses, it always motivates me a lot to do better and to work harder."

The 33-year-old looked strong Monday, purple braids poking out of her visor that matched her floral dress. Williams fought off three break points at 2-2 in the second set in a game that went to six deuces.

Bothered by a lower back injury, Williams was playing just her third event since a first-round loss at the French Open. She hadn't defeated a top-20 opponent since last October.

"I realize that I haven't had a lot of chances to play this year or a lot of chances to play healthy this year, have had injuries and what have you," she said. "So



Venus Williams returns a shot to Belgium's Kirsten Flipkens during the first round of the 2013 U.S. Open tennis tournament, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013, in New York. Williams defeated Flipkens.

Associated Press

I'm just going to have to keep working my way into it maybe more than some of the other players. But I know I can do that."

Flipkens, meanwhile, had been enjoying a career year. The Belgian had never reached the round of 16 at a major tournament before the Australian Open, then made her run at Wimbledon.

Rafael Nadal's stay at Wimbledon ended in his opener. In his first Grand Slam match since — and first U.S. Open since 2011 — the second-seeded Spaniard rolled past American Ryan Harrison 6-4, 6-2, 6-2. Nadal, who missed last year's tournament because of a left knee injury, improved to 16-0 on hard courts this year.

"For me, the chance to be back here playing — I have a chance to compete this year — is great," Nadal said. "I am enjoying the week before practicing. Today the first match after two years in the Arthur Ashe, so is a great feeling."

Continued on page 20

WNBA Capsules

Parker's late score in 2OT lifts Sparks past Shock

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Candace

Parker scored with 5.7 seconds remaining in the second overtime, lifting the Los Angeles Sparks to a hard-fought 90-88 comeback victory over the Tulsa Shock on Sunday.

Parker, who finished with 26 points and 11 rebounds, drove past Tiffany Jackson-Jones from the right side for the winning basket. Tulsa's Riquna Williams watched a 23-foot jumper rim out and Nneka Ogumike rebounded the miss as time expired.

The Sparks (19-8) erased a 19-point deficit in the fourth quarter and moved one game behind Minnesota for first place in the Western Conference. Ogumike finished with 21 points. Tulsa's Liz Cambage left the game with a sprained left ankle with 6:35 remaining in the fourth quarter. Candace Wiggins led the Shock (9-19) with 20 points and Williams had 17.

SILVER STARS 70, STORM 64

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Shenise Johnson had 17 points and 10 re-

bounding streak.

Danielle Adams and Jia Perkins

assists in her second career start for San Antonio (10-17).

Reserve forward Noelle Quinn had 14 points to lead Seattle (13-14). Tina Thompson and Camille Little each had 11 points and Temeka Wright added 10 for the Storm.

LIBERTY 74, SUN 66

UNCASVILLE, Connecticut (AP) — Plenette Pierson scored 18 points as New York kept its playoff hopes alive with a win over Connecticut.

Cappie Pondexter scored 14 points and Katie Smith added 13 for the Liberty (11-16), who moved within a game of Indiana for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Kelsey Griffin led Connecticut (7-19) with 22 points while Tina Charles had 18 and Renee Montgomery finished with 14.

The 19 losses set a franchise high for the Sun in a season.

In other WNBA games it was San Antonio 70, Seattle 64; New York 74, Connecticut 66; and Los Angeles 90, Tulsa 88, OT. □



Connecticut Sun's Kelsey Griffin (5) and New York Liberty's Kara Braxton (45) fight for a rebound during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Uncasville, Conn., Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013.

Associated Press

bounds as San Antonio held on to snap Seattle's three-game win-

each had 14 points and Davellyn Whyte added 13 points and seven

York 74, Connecticut 66; and Los Angeles 90, Tulsa 88, OT. □

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Continued from page 18

American Sloane Stephens, seeded 15th, rallied from a set down to beat Mandy Minella of Luxembourg 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (5).

In the day's first big upset, a British man not named Andy Murray — 179th-ranked qualifier Daniel Evans — stunned 11th-seeded Kei Nishikori in straight sets. Evans won 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 in his U.S. Open debut.

Both are 23, but Nishikori was playing in his 17th Grand Slam event, with a 25-16 record coming in. Evans was 0-2, with both losses

coming at Wimbledon. "I was pretty calm today," Evans said. "It wasn't that much of a big deal what was happening on the court. I wasn't nervous serving it out."

Third-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska and fifth-seeded Li Na advanced in straight sets on the women's side. Radwanska beat Silvia Soler-Espinoza 6-1, 6-2, while Li defeated Olga Govortsova 6-2, 6-2.

Radwanska withdrew from her last tournament at Cincinnati on Aug. 15 before her quarterfinal against Li to fly home for her grandfather's funeral.



Rafael Nadal, of Spain, returns a shot to Ryan Harrison during the first round of the 2013 U.S. Open tennis tournament Monday, Aug. 26, 2013, in New York.

Associated Press

American teen Lauren Davis lost by a "double bagel," falling to 18th-seeded Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain 6-0, 6-0 in 57 minutes. No. 16-seeded Sabine Lisicki, the Wimbledon runner-up, beat Vera Dushevina 6-2, 7-6 (3), while 23rd-seeded American Jamie Hampton defeated Lara Arruabarrena 6-4, 6-2.

On the men's side, eighth-seeded Richard Gasquet eliminated American Michael Russell 6-3, 6-4, 6-2. Bernard Tomic rallied past Albert Ramos in five sets, winning 6-3, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (1), 6-3 in nearly four hours. □



In this Aug. 27, 2012 file photo, James Blake returns a shot to Lukas Lacko, of Slovakia, in the first round of play at the 2012 US Open Tennis tournament in New York.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Wiping away tears, former top-five player James Blake announced

Monday that he will retire from tennis after the U.S. Open.

Blake says U.S. Open will be his last tournament

"No real surprise here. This is my last tournament," the 33-year-old Blake said at a news conference during the opening day of action at Flushing Meadows.

"I always wanted to end my career at the U.S. Open," the American added. Blake, who attended Harvard before turning pro in 1999, reached a career-high ranking of No. 4 in 2006. He is currently 100th and has a 9-13 record this season heading into his

first-round match in the U.S. Open against Ivo Karlovic. Blake reached three Grand Slam quarterfinals, including two in New York, losing at that stage to Andre Agassi in 2005 and to Roger Federer in 2006. He mentioned that five-set defeat against Agassi as a highlight and lowlight of his time on tour. Blake's announcement comes a year after his friend and former U.S. Davis Cup teammate,

Andy Roddick, retired after the U.S. Open.

"Despite the tears, I'm actually really happy about this," said Blake, noting that he looks forward to spending more time with his wife and their 1-year-old daughter.

Asked about what he would like to do in the future, Blake mentioned two possibilities: serving as captain of the U.S. Davis Cup team, and working as a television commentator. □

Gatlin beats Ashmeade to win 100 at Gugl Games

LINZ, Austria (AP) — American sprinter Justin Gatlin overcame the rain and a challenge by Jamaica's Nickel Ashmeade to win the 100 meters at the Gugl Games on Monday.

Gatlin, beaten for the world title by Usain Bolt in Moscow earlier this month, was the fastest starter but saw his lead narrowed by Ashmeade, who won a relay gold with Jamaica at the worlds. The American clocked 10.08 seconds to beat Ashmeade by 0.09. Keston Bledman of Trinidad and Tobago trailed Gatlin by 0.19 in third.

"Today my legs were tired," said Gatlin, who announced before the race

he was going to attack the track record of 9.92. However, he failed to seriously threaten the 19-year-old mark.

"I promise I'll break the Gugl record next year," he said.

The field of the European Athletics meet included 11 current or former Olympic gold medalists and four reigning world champions but the wet conditions and low temperatures prevented them from posting outstanding results.

World record-holder Aries Merritt of the United States beat 2008 Olympic champion Dayron Robles by 0.23 to take the 110 hurdles in 13.26. Mikel Thomas of Trini-

dad and Tobago was another 0.02 back in third.

Olympic pole vault champion Renaud Lavillenie of France had no valid attempt as the competition was won by his younger brother Valentin, who had a best jump of 5.63 meters. Russia's Aleksandr Menkov lived up to expectations by easily winning the long jump. The Russian world champion's best effort of 7.94 meter beat Britain's Chris Tomlinson's by 0.15.

On the women's side, Olympic champion Sally Pearson of Australia won the 100 hurdles in 12.83, leading second-place Reina-Flor Okori of France by 0.35. □



United States' Justin Gatlin reacts after a men's 4x100-meter relay heat at the World Athletics Championships in the Luzhniki stadium in Moscow, Russia, Sunday, Aug. 18, 2013.

Associated Press

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Tracy McGrady announces retirement from NBA

By JON KRAWCZYNSKI
AP Basketball Writer

Those sleepy eyes always betrayed Tracy McGrady. Whether he was pouring in 13 points in 35 seconds for Houston in 2004 or sitting on the bench and watching the San Antonio Spurs win another playoff game in June without needing him, that cool expression rarely changed. It all looked almost too easy for McGrady, even if it rarely was.

McGrady announced his retirement from the NBA on Monday, ending a 16-year career that included two scoring titles, seven All-Star appearances, injuries to his knee and back and zero playoff series wins while he was leading the way. The straight-from-high school project who blossomed into a dominant, two-way superstar will always be remembered, too, as a player who struggled with injuries.

"Thank all of you who have supported me over 16 NBA seasons, 7 All-Stars, and countless exciting moments," McGrady tweeted on Monday morning. "Retir-

ing from NBA. Stay tuned." McGrady didn't rule out continuing his career overseas, perhaps in China where he played last season.

"Officially retired from the NBA," he said on ESPN. "Door's still open."

McGrady was drafted by Toronto out of high school in 1997 and was outshined early in his career by Raptors star Vince Carter, McGrady's distant cousin. He became a star in Orlando, was traded to Houston in 2004 and also played for the Knicks, Pistons and Hawks before finishing up his career with the Spurs last season. He averaged 19.6 points, 5.6 rebounds and 4.4 assists per game in his career and at one point was considered one of the best perimeter players of his generation, a talent that rivaled Kobe Bryant and any other player in the league.

"Congrats to Tracy McGrady on an awesome career," LeBron James tweeted. "7-time All-NBA (2 1st Team), 2-time scoring champ, and just an all-around dazzling talent."

The Raptors drafted McGrady ninth overall out of Mount Zion Academy and spoon-fed him early while his body developed to withstand the rigors of the NBA. By his third season, McGrady was averaging 15.4 points, 6.3 rebounds and showing all the early signs of becoming a star. He left Toronto after that season, joining up with Grant Hill in Orlando, which is where some of the hard luck that plagued McGrady for years first started to surface.

"There are a lot of things that go into winning in the NBA," former Rockets coach Jeff Van Gundy said in a phone interview. "And until McGrady's body betrayed him, he was a dominant player."

McGrady's body wasn't the only one that let him down.

Hill hardly played in his first two seasons in Orlando, leaving McGrady to carry the load all by himself. He averaged 33.8 points per game in the Magic's first-round playoff loss to Milwaukee, then scored 30.8



In this Jan. 18, 2012 file photo, Atlanta Hawks small forward Tracy McGrady (1) is shown during an NBA basketball game against the Portland Trail Blazers in Atlanta.

Associated Press

per game in a four-game loss to Charlotte the following season.

He delivered his finest individual season in 2002-03, winning his first scoring title with 32.1 points while averaging 6.5 rebounds, 5.5 assists and 1.7 steals in a tour-de-force season that ended, once again, with a first-round exit at the hands of the Pistons.

No matter how brilliantly McGrady played, he couldn't get his teams over the hump in the postseason, and a narrative started to form. After the Magic missed the postseason in 2003-04, McGrady was traded to the Rock-

ets. He enjoyed one of the crowning moments of his career that season when he scored 13 points in 35 seconds to lift the Rockets over the Spurs in a December game.

But more than the scoring prowess, which put McGrady practically in a class by himself, Van Gundy prized his star player for his versatility - he was a lockdown defender, deft passer and could be a force on the glass.

"Maybe his greatest attribute is he's one of the best wing passers ever," Van Gundy said. "Great size, great skill, incredibly unselfish." □

Johnson gives Seattle 1-0 win over rival Portland

SEATTLE (AP) — Eddie Johnson nodded a header past Portland goalkeeper Donovan Ricketts off a free kick in the 60th minute as the Seattle Sounders made Clint Dempsey's home debut memorable with a 1-0 win Sunday over the Timbers before the second-largest, stand-alone crowd in Major League Soccer history. MLS Roundup

The crowd of 67,385 trailed only the first home game for the Los Angeles Galaxy against New York in 1996



Seattle Sounders' Eddie Johnson, right, celebrates with DeAndre Yedlin, left, after he scored a goal against the Portland Timbers in the second half of a MLS soccer match, Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013, in Seattle. The Sounders beat the Timbers, 1-0.

Associated Press

that drew 69,255. It topped the 66,452 that saw Seattle and Portland play last October at CenturyLink Field and was the largest for any match in Seattle, topping a friendly against Manchester United in 2011.

The Sounders moved into a share for fifth place in the Western Conference with 37 points and still have at least one game in hand on the rest of their playoff competition.

In Carson, California, Erick Torres scored two goals, the

first from a penalty, as Chivas USA beat the New York Red Bulls 3-2. Julio Morales also scored to help Chivas, while Tim Cahill and Dax McCarty scored for the Red Bulls, both off Thierry Henry passes. New England's Kelyn Rowe scored twice to lead the Revolution past the Philadelphia Union 5-1. Diego Fagundez and Juan Agudelo also scored for the Revolution, who also benefited from an own goal by Philadelphia's Amobi Okugo. □

Newspaper: Cuban 1st baseman Abreu defects

HAVANA (AP) — An official Cuban newspaper says star first baseman Jose Daniel Abreu has defected to try to play in Major League Baseball.

The weekly Trabajadores newspaper reported Monday that Abreu left Cuba "illegally and silently" to a Caribbean nation, probably Haiti or the Dominican Republic.

The newspaper did not give more details about how Abreu left or where he went.

The 26-year-old Abreu played all six matches for



In this March 4, 2013 file photo, Cuba's first baseman Jose Abreu reacts after hitting a grand slam off China's Liu Yu in the fifth inning of their World Baseball Classic first round game in Fukuoka, Japan.

Associated Press

Cuba in the World Baseball Classic in March, hitting .383 with three home runs and nine RBIs.

Abreu is the fourth Cuban player to defect in the past two months, adding to the departures of first baseman Yozzen Cuesta and pitchers Misael Siveiro and Odrisamer Despaigne.

Cuban defectors Yoenis Cespedes and Yasiel Puig have recently signed multimillion dollar contracts to play in MLB. □

Horner wins 3rd stage of Vuelta to take lead

VILAGARCIA DE AROUSA, Spain (AP) — American veteran Christopher Horner won Monday's third stage of the Spanish Vuelta to take the overall leader's jersey, with race organizers saying he became the oldest rider to earn a stage victory in one of cycling's three grand tours.

The 41-year-old RadioShack-Leopard rider broke away on the last uphill climb to win the 172-kilometer (107-mile) ride from Vigo to Vilagarcia de Arousa in 4 hours, 30 minutes, 18 seconds.

Horner overtook Giro d'Italia winner Vincenzo Nibali as the race leader, with the Italian now 3 seconds back in second.

"My legs felt very good today. I am very, very happy and feel very

strong," Horner said, adding that he believed the overall victory was within his reach. "I'm a small guy and don't weigh much, so I like big mountains. Maybe I can win. I won the Tour of Basque Country, so why can't I win the Spanish Vuelta?"

Race organizers did not immediately say whose age record Horner broke. The Vuelta is the third grand tour of the season after the Giro and the Tour de France.

Gusting winds caused the peloton to break into small groups as the course took riders along the coast before crossing a bridge to the island of Arousa for a final category-three climb to the finish line, which Horner crossed with his arms raised in victory. □



Christopher Horner of USA wins the third stage of the Spanish Vuelta, a 185-kilometer (115-mile) ride starting in Vigo and finishing at the Mirador de Lobeira summit in Vilagarcia de Arousa, Spain, Monday, Aug. 26, 2013.

Associated Press

Scott

Continued from page 18

Woods finished one shot behind, unable to atone for three bad swings that led to bogeys on the back nine.

The big picture was Monday morning.

Scott moved up to a career-best No. 2 in the world, but he's really no closer to Woods than he ever has been.

Even if the Australian were to win the next three FedEx Cup playoff events — about as easy as winning four straight majors — he still wouldn't replace Woods at No. 1. That's how big the gap is between Woods and the rest of golf. Woods hasn't won a major in five years, but he's still winning against strong fields. And even though nagging injuries seem to be piling up, he's winning more than anyone else.

That's what Scott will have to learn to do if he wants to be the best in the world. This is only the second time Scott has had a multiple-win season on the PGA Tour. The other was in 2004,

when he won The Players Championship and the Booz Allen Classic at Congressional. Around the world, he has won at least once in each of the last 13 seasons, but never more than two wins in any season.

Scott now has 21 wins worldwide, leaving him 70 behind Woods.

Woods is never a fair comparison for anyone. Scott said as much seven years ago when asked what it was like to grow up dreaming about being the best in the world and being stuck in the same generation as a guy like Woods.

"The hardest thing now is for young kids to realize this Tiger benchmark is out of most everyone's league," he said at the end of the 2006 season, when Woods had won six straight PGA Tour events.

He jokingly said that day he would have to wait until Woods went through another swing change. That time has come and gone. Scott at least entered the conversation for PGA Tour player of the year with his win at The Barclays, though that depends on the next month. Winning another



Tiger Woods reacts to his tee shot on the 17th hole during the final round of The Barclays golf tournament on Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013, in Jersey City, N.J. Woods finished in a four-way tie for second place.

FedEx Cup playoff event would give him three victories, including a major. Is that enough to trump five wins and no majors?

Then again, it was Scott who last week didn't hesitate when asked who has had the best year in golf so far.

"Five wins? Tiger's had the best year," he said. "If you think winning a major is what you base success on, then if you haven't (won), you haven't had a great year. But winning ... I've always based it around

winning events, and I don't think one major makes up for five tournaments."

To see Scott swing a club is to ask why he's not winning more often. Scott prides himself on consistency, but since his playoff win at Augusta National, he had only one serious look at winning this year until The Barclays. That was at the British Open, where he had the lead on the back nine at Muirfield until making four straight bogeys as Phil Mickelson finished off one of the great final rounds in a major to win the claret jug.

Vijay Singh hit his stride in 2004 and won nine times. Rory McIlroy took over at No. 1 last year when he won five times.

That's where Scott needs to be. Perhaps this is a start.

"To have multiple wins on the PGA Tour is a pretty good accomplishment, I think," Scott said. "There aren't too many guys doing it regularly, and I'm not, either. But I'd like to. I'm trying to jump off that springboard and win more regularly, and I think I'm going about it the right way."

One thing Scott and Woods have in common

is their schedule. Neither plays a lot of tournament golf. Scott has 41 events on his world ranking ledger over the last two years while Woods has 39. That's by design. Scott is playing less and getting more out of it. The weeks at his home in the Bahamas are spent on quality practice.

It's working. He's the Masters champion. He's No. 2 in the world. He is playing the best golf of his career.

"It's interesting," Scott said. "I felt like earlier in my career, I gave myself a lot more chances to win tournaments because I played a lot more. The last couple of years, my focus shifted a bit and I changed my schedule and played a lot less tournaments. So I think I've got less opportunity to win. I've focused on the bigger tournaments, which are not easy to win — not that any others are."

"Kind of developed my game into being more consistent, performing in the big ones," he said. "And now I'm trying to adapt that to be a winner on a more frequent basis."

Only when that happens — if it happens — will the No. 1 ranking come into view. □



In this Wednesday, July 24, 2013 photo, Terra Motors employees, Koshi Kuwahara, right, and Shimpei Kato work at its headquarters at Tokyo's Shibuya district.

Associated Press

YURI KAGEYAMA
AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — In a shabby back-alley office in Shibuya, a Tokyo district known for youth culture and tech ventures, defectors from corporate Japan are hard at work for a little known company they fervently believe will be the country's next big manufacturing success.

Like a startup anywhere in the world, its bare bone setup crackles with an optimistic energy and urgent sense of purpose. What's different, for Japan, is that this startup's talent is drawn from the ranks of famous companies such as Mitsubishi, Michelin and Nissan.

Kohshi Kuwahara, 26, worked for more than two years at electronics giant Panasonic Corp. before hopping to Terra Motors Corp., a little known venture that pays far less but is out to conquer the world with its stylish electric scooters. As with his colleagues at Terra, he resiled from the hidebound culture of big Japanese companies and felt a deep sense of frustration at their eclipse by rivals such as South Korea's Samsung and America's Apple. "If you're stuck in a system that promotes just by seniority, it's living a slow death like animals on a farm," said Kuwahara. "I wanted to be in a tough competitive place."

Despite having some of the developed world's least hospitable conditions for starting a new business, Japan's "salaryman" culture of guaranteed lifetime employment at a household name corporation is no

longer the unquestioned ideal.

Ventures are sprouting again after a decade marred by some high-profile failures and a striking aspect is their focus on manufacturing. Facebook and Google they are not. They are Sony and Toyota, all over again — but with young fresh faces.

Terra Motors founder and president Toru Tokushige, 43, said one sign of progress for startups is that these days they have no problems recruiting quality people.

A few years ago, all he could hire were what Japan categorized as the losers, those who had no hopes of getting hired at an established company. As Sony Corp. and other mainstream brands lose their luster, Terra is gaining a chance to shine.

Tokushige's 15 employees now hail from top-name companies, and the interns are enrolled in Hitotsubashi, one of Japan's top universities.

He acknowledges that plans for his tiny company to break into global markets still sound a little crazy by mainstream Japanese standards. But he believes his way of doing business is superior to bigger companies, where decision-making tends to be bureaucratic, slow and oriented toward avoiding risks.

"Mainstream companies started out as ventures. That means old-time Japanese did it," he said of the humble beginnings of Honda, Sony, Panasonic and All Nippon Airways. "We can do it, too."

Startups gain appeal as some Japan Inc. names fade



In this photo taken Wednesday, July 24, 2013, Terra Motors President Toru Tokushige speaks during an interview at its headquarters in Tokyo.

Associated Press

At their former employers, Tokushige's workers felt stifled, although they were promised stability, status and money. They knew what they could contribute was limited, while at Terra, they can hope to make a crucial and tangible contribution.

"What we want to do is create another Sony or another Honda," said Kazuaki Konno, 35, an engineer who worked previously at Nissan Motor Co. and Boston Consulting before joining Terra.

At a shareholders' meeting in June, Sony President Kazuo Hirai was asked by an investor about an alleged exodus of talent from the company. The investor expressed worries about continued creativity at Sony. Hirai reiterated he would do all he could to keep innovation going, but he did not deny the allegation. Such defectors are setting a trend, said author Ryuichi Kino, who has written books about the Japanese auto and nuclear industries, and is working on a book about the advent of career switches and job-hopping in Japan.

"These people are searching for their place. For those with talent, they would rather go where they are wanted than endure suffering where they are," he said.

The office of Terra Motors is a tiny room in a building in the cramped slummy Shibuya district known as "Bit Valley," Japan's equivalent of Silicon Valley for housing startups.

Recently, Terra came out with an electric scooter targeting emerging markets that connects to smartphones to gather location-based and electricity-consumption data. They charge from a regular plug outlet.

Terra, set up in 2010, received investment capital from top funds, including one run by former Sony President Nobuyuki Idei. It already has top market share in electric scooters in Japan, and is eyeing overseas markets including Vietnam, India and the Philippines.

Its success so far is against the odds.

The World Bank, in ranking the ease with which a new business can be started, scored Japan 114th among 185 economies. New Zealand was at the top, and the U.S. was No. 13. Singapore was fourth, while Ghana was 112th.

Japan's initial public offerings, at 36 in 2011, make for a fraction of the numbers in the U.S. at 134, according to PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Adding to the obstacles, the prevailing message for

the past decade in Japan was that startups were not to be trusted.

The ones that used to get attention tended to be video-game companies such as Gree Inc., which got slammed over the alleged anti-social addictiveness of its games, and the wayward, such as Net services company Livedoor, whose founder was arrested in a securities fraud scandal.

It is only recently that some vigor has returned to ventures. Part of the explanation may be the renewed focus on manufacturing.

Japan's four decades of industrial success after World War II were followed by more than two decades of stagnation, mainly because of the absence of innovation, said Masazumi Ishii, managing director of AZCA Inc., a California consulting firm specializing in international corporate development.

For innovations to happen, poorly performing large companies need to be allowed to fail, and innovative smaller companies must be nurtured and funded, he said.

The technological prowess is there. Japan still produces its share of Nobel Prize winners, ranking eighth in the world, and Japan's top universities file as many patents as do top U.S. universities, according to Ishii. □

Stock markets move sideways on Kerry comments

MATTHEW CRAFT
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market sagged Monday after the Obama administration ratcheted up pressure against Syria.

Secretary of State John Kerry said there was "undeniable" evidence of a large-scale chemical weapons attack in Syria last week, and suggested the administration was edging closer to a military response.

The S&P 500 index slipped 6.72 points, or 0.4 percent, to close at 1,656.78. It was up two points just before Kerry began reading his statement Monday afternoon.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 64.05 points, or 0.4 percent, to close at 14,946.46. The Nasdaq composite slipped 0.22 of a point, or 0.01 percent, to 3,657.57.

Stephen J. Carl, head equity trader at the Williams

Capital Group, observed that the market had drifted for most of the day until Kerry's televised talk jolted stocks.

A handful of corporate

deals helped give the market a lift in the early going. Amgen surged following its announcement late Sunday that the biotech giant plans to buy Onyx

Pharmaceuticals for \$10.4 billion. The acquisition would give Amgen three approved cancer treatments and several other potential drugs.

In economic news, the government reported that orders for long-lasting manufactured goods plunged 7.3 percent last month, the steepest drop in nearly a year. Demand for commercial aircraft sank and businesses spent less on computers and electrical equipment.

Jack Ablin, the chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank in Chicago, said it's likely that investors are looking past the one bad economic report because so many major events loom ahead.

The Federal Reserve will start a two-day meeting Sept. 17 at which officials will discuss phasing out support for the economy. After that, Germany holds national elections that could change how the region handles rescue loans for troubled countries. Congress returns from its summer break next week and will take up a new budget before the fiscal year starts on Oct. 1.

"These issues are big enough to transcend daily data," Ablin said.

The market is expected stay quiet this week, when many traders typically take their final summer vacations ahead of Labor Day.

In corporate news, shares of TMS International jumped 12 percent after members of the Pritzker family agreed to buy the industrial company. The Pritzker family, one of America's wealthiest, operates a global industrial conglomerate and founded the Hyatt hotel chain. TMS jumped \$1.91 to \$17.48.

With five trading days left in August, the major indexes are on track to end the month with slight losses. The Dow has lost 3.4 percent. If that holds, it would be the Dow's worst month since May 2012.

In the market for U.S. government bonds, the yield on the 10-year note slipped to 2.78 percent from 2.82 percent late Friday.

Crude oil slipped 50 cents to \$105.92 a barrel. Gold fell \$2.70 to settle at \$1,393 an ounce. □



Floor Governor Nicholas Brigandi is framed by trading post screens as he works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The stock market sagged Monday after the Obama administration ratcheted up pressure against Syria, raising concern the US is edging closer to a military response.
(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

Orders for long-lasting US factory goods plunge

C. S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Orders for long-lasting U.S. factory goods fell sharply last month as demand for commercial aircraft plummeted and businesses spent less on computers and electrical equipment. Manufacturing continues to struggle and could prevent economic growth from picking up in the July-September quarter.

Orders for durable goods plunged 7.3 percent in July, the Commerce Department said Monday. It's the steepest drop in nearly a year. Excluding the volatile transportation category, orders fell just 0.6 percent. Both declines followed three straight months of increases.

Durable goods are items meant to last at least three years.

Economists tend to focus on orders for so-called core capital goods. Those orders fell 3.3 percent, but the drop followed four straight months of gains.

Core capital goods are considered a good mea-

sure of businesses' confidence in the economy. They include items that point to expansion — such as machinery, computers

estimates for the July-September quarter after seeing the durable goods report. Economists at Barclays Capital now predict

economist at Capital Economics, said in an email.

One bright spot was that unfilled orders rose to their highest level since record began in 1992. Those are orders that were placed in previous months but yet to be shipped. The increase suggests output could remain steady in the coming months, despite the weak month of orders in July.

And orders for autos and auto parts rose 0.5 percent, the second straight gain. Auto sales jumped 14 percent in July compared with a year earlier.

Manufacturing has slumped this year, hurt by weakness overseas that has dragged on U.S. exports. But there have been signs that factory activity could pick up in the second half of the year.

Europe finally emerged from recession in the spring. And in June, U.S. exports rose to an all-time high.

A survey by the Institute for Supply Management, a trade group, said factory activity expanded in July at the fastest pace in two years. □



A salesman shows customers washers and dryers at Aggressive Appliances store in Orlando, Fla. Orders for long-lasting U.S. factory goods fell sharply last month as demand for commercial aircraft plummeted and businesses spent less on computers and electrical equipment.

(AP Photo/John Raoux)

and heavy trucks — while excluding volatile orders for aircraft and defense.

The big drop suggests the third quarter is off to a weaker start than some had hoped. While economists cautioned that it's just one month of data, a few lowered their growth

third-quarter growth at an annual rate of 1.9 percent, down from their previous forecast of 2.1 percent.

"At the very least, it is a reminder that the expected pick-up in economic growth in the second half of the year will be gradual," Paul Ashworth, an

BATS Global Markets buys Direct Edge

NEW YORK (AP) — Stock exchange operator BATS Global Markets is buying Direct Edge to create the second-biggest U.S. stock exchange.

The new company will account for about 21 percent of the approximately 6.5 billion shares that are traded daily on exchanges, according to BATS. It would leapfrog over the Nasdaq and rank behind the New York Stock Exchange.

The combination is "an important milestone for the U.S. equities market," said BATS CEO Joe Ratterman, who will serve as CEO of the merged company.

The deal is part of a trend of consolidation among global stock exchanges. Technology has increased the speed at which trades are processed, but reduced the profit margins that exchanges can make on shares traded.

Earlier this month, regulators approved a \$8 billion sale of the NYSE to Atlanta-based IntercontinentalExchange, or ICE. The NYSE's parent company was itself created by a merger of the NYSE Group and Europe's Euronext exchange company.

The NYSE has a market share of about 23 percent and the Nasdaq has a market share of 18 percent.

The four U.S. stock exchanges run by BATS and Direct Edge will continue to operate.

Both companies are privately owned. Direct Edge is owned by a consortium that includes International Securities Exchange, Knight Capital Group, Citadel Derivatives Group, The Goldman Sachs Group, and J.P. Morgan. BATS Global Markets is owned by a group that includes Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank and Morgan Stanley. The combined company will use BATS technology and be headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri.

The deal is expected to close in the first half of next year. □

KPN wins America Movil support for German deal

TOBY STERLING
AP Business Writer

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Dutch telecom group Royal KPN NV said Monday it had won the support of its largest shareholder, Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim, to sell its German unit E-Plus to Spain's Telefonica SA after it sweetened the offer to \$11.4 billion.

A statement issued by KPN Monday said that Slim's America Movil would give its "irrevocable commitment" to back the E-Plus sale.

This would leave the path open for Slim — who according to Forbes magazine is the world's richest man with a \$73 billion fortune — to proceed in his quest to acquire the rest of KPN, which has major operations in the Netherlands and Belgium.

In July KPN agreed to sell E-Plus in exchange for 5 billion euros (\$6.68 billion) in cash and a 17.6 percent stake in Telefonica Deutschland, worth an estimated total of 8.1 billion euros (\$10.4 billion).

Monday's deal increases the stake KPN will receive in Telefonica Deutschland to 20.5 percent.

Telefonica said in a statement Monday that the deal would "result in a new strong player in the German mobile market with 43 million mobile customers" and combined revenues

of 8.6 billion euros annually. The 43 million subscribers would beat the current two strongest mobile providers in Germany, Deutsche Telekom AG, with 37 million, and Vodafone PLC, with 34 million — though with less revenue.

The deal must be approved by European regulators. KPN shareholders are due

In a separate statement Monday, America Movil said it was still committed to buying KPN and clarified its plans for the Dutch company, saying it wants to strengthen it with superior technology, better procurement and more investment.

"America Movil intends to respect the identity of

ing KPN's initial plan to sell E-Plus, Slim launched a bid to acquire the 70 percent of KPN he doesn't already own for 2.40 euros per share, or 7.2 billion euros.

At the time, Slim didn't disclose whether he would support or oppose the E-Plus sale, and many interpreted the move as a hostile takeover bid and a way to block the Telefonica deal.

In its statement Monday, Movil said it would "investigate expansion investments that will differentiate KPN as a leading telecom service provider in its home markets." It added that if fewer than 95 percent of KPN shareholders tender shares to its offer, it will maintain KPN's Dutch stock market listing and guarantee minority shareholders' rights.

KPN's boards have yet to issue an opinion on Movil's offer but analysts said Monday's statement from the Mexican company addressed several concerns raised by the KPN Foundation — a company institution common in the Netherlands which has the power to issue extra shares to thwart unwanted takeovers.

Shares in KPN were trading at 2.33 euros Monday, slightly under Movil's offer price. □



People walk past a KPN store in Amsterdam. Dutch telecom group Royal KPN NV said Monday it had won the support of its largest shareholder, Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim, to sell its German unit E-Plus to Spain's Telefonica SA after it sweetened the offer to \$11.4 billion.

(AP Photo/Margriet Faber)

to vote on the deal Oct. 2. Analysts for ABN Amro said in a note Monday that it was "remarkable that America Movil has endorsed the E-Plus sale, because the German unit was an important pillar of its European expansion plans."

KPN," the statement said. It promised to keep the KPN brand and the company's headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands. Slim has built a stake of just under 30 percent of KPN via America Movil over the past two years. Follow-

Economists: Future deficits top US fiscal problem

NEW YORK (AP) — The biggest fiscal challenge facing the U.S. is the size of projected deficits in the 2020s and 2030s, according to a survey of business economists.

The National Association for Business Economics surveyed 220 of its members in July and August.

The survey found that members were more concerned about the size of deficits in the next two decades than current deficits or deficits over the next 10 years: 43 percent of the economists named budget gaps in the 2020s and 2030s as the top fiscal challenge, compared with 37 percent

who chose projected deficits over the next 10 years. The policy survey found no consensus on the best way to address those deficits. The NABE said 39 percent of those surveyed felt the best way to address the deficit-to-gross domestic product ratio in the next few decades is a mix of spending restraint and increased revenue. It said 32 percent believe the best single tool would be greater spending restraint, and 20 percent said enacting policies designed to encourage economic growth would be the best tactic.

Ballooning costs for safety net programs as the U.S.

population ages are expected to result in growing long-term budget deficits. The NABE said there is broader agreement about monetary policy, as a majority of panelists think the Federal Reserve's current policy is "about right." But the respondents widely diverged on when they think the central bank will stop its policy of buying bonds to prop up the economy.

The Fed's bond buying has helped keep U.S. interest rates near record lows. But speculation about when the Fed will slow or stop the program has fed volatility in the financial

markets.

About 39 percent of survey respondents think the Fed will begin slowing the program in the fourth quarter of this year.

Some, about 7 percent, think it won't happen until 2015 or later.

About 39 percent think the Fed will wait until 2015 or later to begin raising its interest rate targets, its traditional tool for balancing economic growth with keeping inflation in check. Majorities also said that a path to citizenship or other legal status for people who entered the country illegally will strengthen economic growth. □

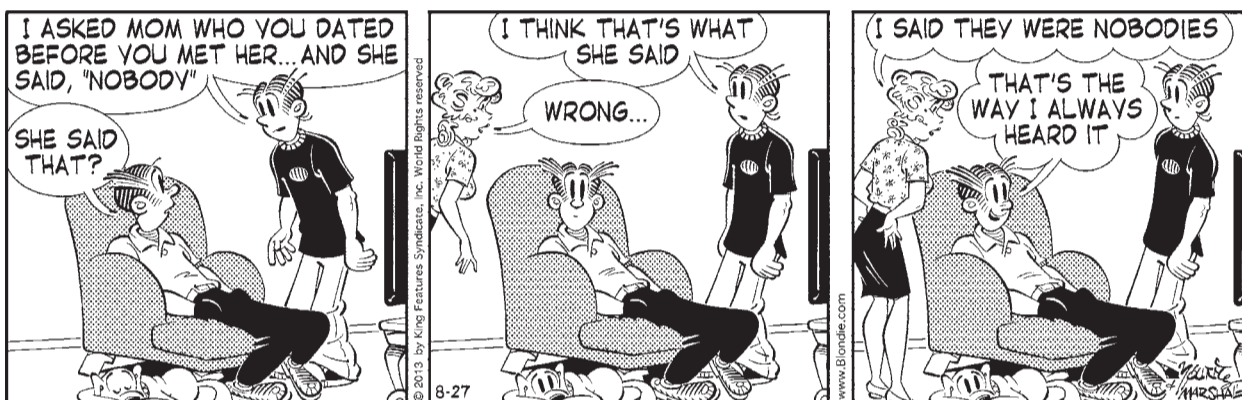
Mutts



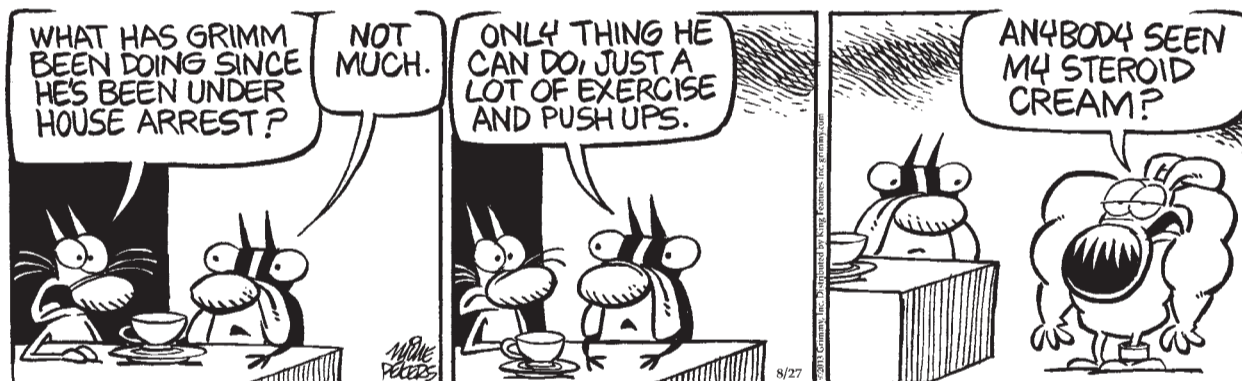
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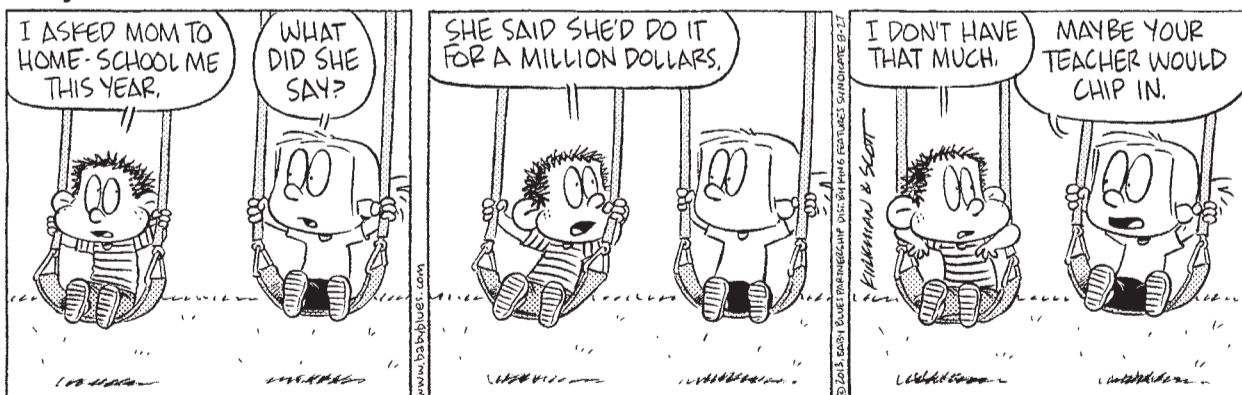
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Conceptis Sudoku

9		3					7		
	8				2	1			
2		6							4
				2	9			6	
	9			7	1	4		2	
	7				6	5			
4							6		8
				9	4			1	
		1					5		9

Difficulty Level ★★

8/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

6	9	8	1	3	4	7	5	2
7	2	5	6	9	8	3	4	1
3	4	1	5	2	7	8	9	6
4	6	7	8	1	9	5	2	3
9	8	3	4	5	2	6	1	7
1	5	2	7	6	3	4	8	9
5	3	4	2	7	1	9	6	8
8	1	9	3	4	6	2	7	5
2	7	6	9	8	5	1	3	4

ACROSS

- 1 Highest point
- 5 Quick looks
- 10 ___ as molasses
- 14 Actress ___ Perlman
- 15 Adjust an alarm
- 16 Musical sound
- 17 Feel the loss of
- 18 Coeur d'___, ID
- 19 Get ___; take revenge
- 20 Religious splits
- 22 Most orderly
- 24 Golfer Ernie ___
- 25 Southern Slavs in the Balkans
- 26 Persnickety
- 29 ___ the time; constantly
- 30 Two-by-four
- 34 College credit
- 35 Banana cream

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
20				21			22		23			
24				25								
26	27	28		29			30		31	32	33	
34				35			36					
37				38			39		40			
41		42				43			44			
45						46			47			
48				49			50					
51	52	53				54			55	56	57	
58				59		60			61			
62				63					64			
65				66					67			

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

8/27/13

Monday's Puzzle Solved

HAZEL	ELMS	ABLE
ARENA	DIET	READ
LEARN	GATE	KING
SALAD	BAR	PRANCE
GEAR	SPONGES	
ALBERT	POEMS	
LEO	SHEER	EAGER
DAUB	EXCEL	SAVE
ANTIC	PARES	TED
GLEAM	METERS	
ASSAULT	DORA	
NAPPED	MINISTER	
DRIP	ERIC	ASIDE
EARL	SINK	LENIN
SHOE	TOES	SLEET

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8/27/13

DOWN

- 1 Up in ___; irate

- 2 Stylish
- 3 Net fabric
- 4 Least difficult
- 5 Baby carriages
- 6 Morays and congers
- 7 WNW + 180°
- 8 Boarding facility for dogs
- 9 Take the helm
- 10 Western hat
- 11 Puppy ___; early infatuation
- 12 Dollar bills
- 13 ___ away; left
- 21 Devious
- 23 Monastery head
- 25 Coat parts
- 26 Hot ___ sundae
- 27 Workers' group
- 28 Colander
- 29 Shoot carefully
- 31 Zeal
- 32 "All ___ lead to Rome"
- 33 Stupid
- 35 Brooch
- 36 Showy flower, for short

- 38 Lovers' meeting
- 39 Lubricate
- 42 Prestigious
- 44 With clamor
- 46 ___ attitude; mindset
- 47 Garden tool
- 49 ___ at; observes
- 50 Roles
- 51 Grouch
- 52 Gospel writer
- 53 Wading bird
- 54 Ham or beef
- 55 Threesome
- 56 Promising
- 57 Latch ___; grasp
- 60 Refrain syllable

On The Road: New rivals in the competition for convention business

JOE SHARKEY

© 2013 New York Times

Chekitan Dev, a professor at Cornell University who specializes in the hotel industry, drove past a Marriott Courtyard near Los Angeles the other day and was surprised by a big banner out front that invited corporate event planners to call or stop in for more information about holding meetings there - for 10 to 30 people. Two things struck him about this. One, the banner indicated just how competitive the \$117 billion-a-year meetings and conventions business is becoming in the U.S. And two, it shows just how local and fragmented segments of it are, even as the overall meetings business grows nationally and internationally. During the recession, companies, professional organizations, universities and government entities all cut back on meetings spending, but for most, recovery has been slow but persistent. Yes, there were 4.9 million conventions and meetings attendees among the 39.7 million visitors to Las Vegas, a convention giant, last year, while at the same time there were more and more smaller events held at a growing number of cities, hotels and other meetings centers. The huge conventions and trade shows still rack up Super Bowl-level attendance in cities like Las Vegas (where the Consumer Electronics Association trade show alone draws more than 150,000 annually), Orlando, Chicago, Atlanta and others. But even in the city that claims to be No. 1, Las Vegas, the overall numbers have been declining slightly in the past few years, according to data from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

As the competition intensifies and expands globally, other cities have been spending on improving convention and meetings sites, and so have hotels of all sizes. At the same time, many planners are booking smaller meetings

locations closer to home - even if there are more meetings overall. "There has been an increase in the sheer number of hotels with meetings facilities, and now midsize hotels are more aggressively pursuing



While cities like Las Vegas still dominate the convention industry, smaller towns are aggressively marketing their amenities.

(Chi Birmingham/The New York Times)

small meetings," said Dev, who teaches marketing at Cornell's School of Hotel Administration. A new report by Cvent, the big technology-based meetings-management company, underscores some of the changes occurring in the meetings business. Its annual list of the top destinations in the U.S. is still dominated by the big traditional convention towns like Orlando, Chicago and Las Vegas. But the list has also been churning, reflecting more aggressive marketing by other cities in the lower tiers. Among the cities new to the top 50 list this year are Coronado, Calif.; National Harbor, Md.; Tuc-

son, Ariz.; and Naples, Fla., Cvent says.

"The biggest reason is because of the investment that a city itself makes, whether it's the convention and visitors bureau, the hotels themselves, and even cities that are doing major improvements to their downtown areas like Tucson," said Eric Eden, the vice president for marketing at Cvent. On a larger scale, he cited the \$950 million CityCenterDC downtown project on the site of the former convention center in Washington. As the meetings business expands beyond the traditional locations and mammoth convention halls, individual hotels making major capital improvements are gaining a bigger share of the business. Over the last decade, according to the International Congress and Convention Association, a global trade group, "the usage of meeting facilities in hotels has been gradually increasing at the expense" of big convention centers. In the U.S., with cities and hotels spending again on improvement projects, the game is changing quickly, Eden said. Meetings planners, who traditionally negotiated and selected locations by phone or through personal visits, can now employ sophisticated technology to make selections and negotiate terms, even as the hotel industry itself is recovering strongly and more able to

seek higher rates. Though hotels now have more negotiating traction, those meetings planners who use new technology are also on firmer ground, and not "going to hotels and negotiating one-by-one with a phone call or an email," Eden said. The meetings industry is also growing globally. A recent survey by the consulting firm Frost & Sullivan estimated that the meetings and events industry accounted for a total of \$565 billion globally in 2012. □

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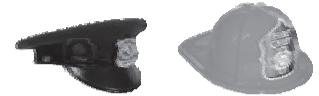
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Test-tube babies: A simpler, cheaper technique?

MARIA CHENG

AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — Since the first test-tube baby was born more than three decades ago, in vitro fertilization has evolved into a highly sophisticated lab procedure. Now, scientists are going back to basics and testing a simpler and cheaper method.

In the West, many would-be parents spend thousands of dollars for IVF, which involves pricey incubators and extensive screening. But European and American scientists say a simplified version of the entire procedure aimed at developing countries could be done for about 200 euros (\$265) with generic fertility drugs and basic lab equipment that would fit inside a shoebox.

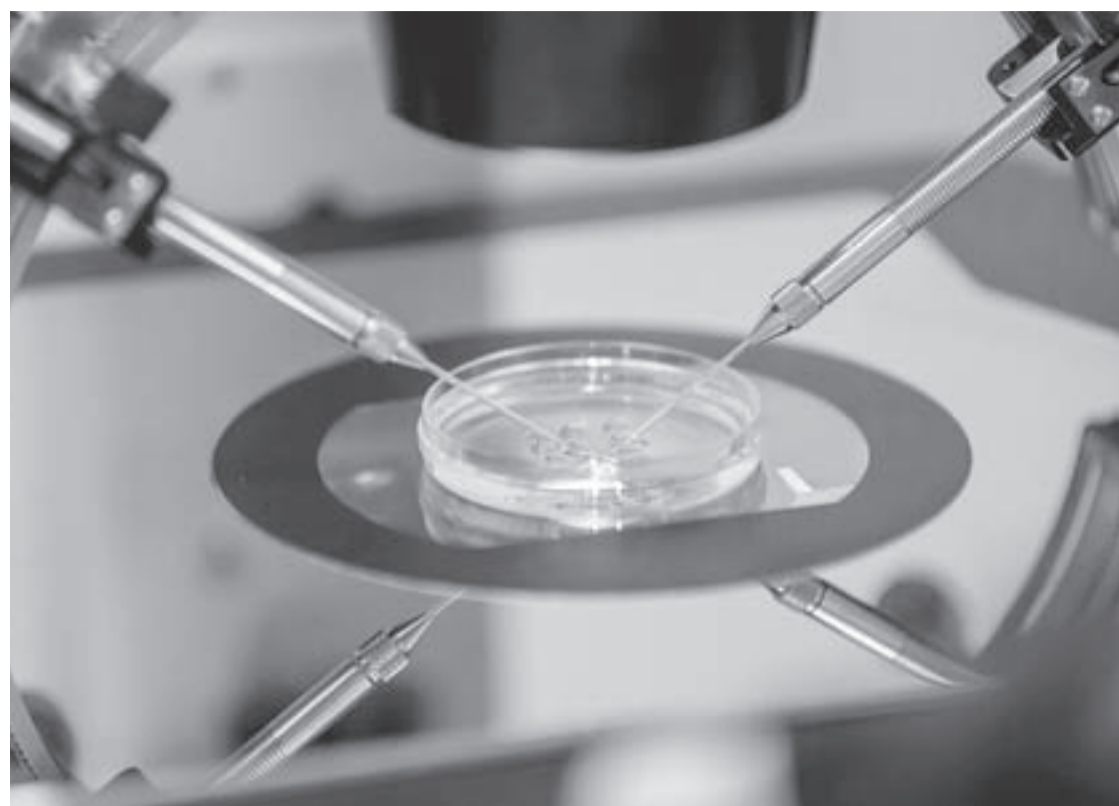
"IVF is made to sound complicated, but the fact is that the early embryo is not very demanding," said Jonathan Van Blerkom, a fertility expert at the University of Colorado.

A human embryo doesn't need much beyond some basic solutions, a steady pH level and constant temperature, he said.

The simpler approach calls for women to take cheaper fertility tablets to stimulate their ovaries to release more than one egg per month. In conventional IVF, expensive, potent drugs that are injected can produce more than 20 eggs. Van Blerkom developed the simplified technique after European colleagues asked him how IVF could be done in developing countries.

"My first reaction was, 'You've got to be kidding,'" he said.

But with two test tubes and special solutions, "it's possible to generate the exact same conditions, or very



In this Aug. 14, 2013, photo, an embryologist works on embryo at the Create Health fertility clinic in south London.

Associated Press

similar, to what people are generating in a \$60,000 incubator."

One test tube is used to prepare a solution including carbon dioxide, which creates the ideal conditions for fertilization. That's piped into a second tube, where one egg and a few thousand sperm are added, before being placed in a heating block. After about two to three days, any resulting embryo is examined under a microscope before being transferred into the woman.

Van Blerkom and colleagues estimated that about half of all people seeking infertility treatment could potentially be helped by the method. Those who have complicated infertility problems, like men with severe sperm problems or women with very few eggs left, will still need standard IVF.

In an ongoing trial in Belgium, researchers are comparing the tech-



In this photo taken Thursday, Aug. 14, 2013, an embryologist works on a petri dish at the Create Health fertility clinic in south London.

Associated Press

niques. Women under 36 seeking IVF for the first time are given a mild dose of injectable fertility drugs. If at least eight eggs are retrieved, half undergo traditional IVF, and half use the simpler method.

A specialist who doesn't know which technique was used picks the best-looking embryo to be transferred. For the more than 100 women treated so far, the pregnancy rate was about 34 percent for both methods. So far, 14 babies have been born using the simplified method and 13 babies from traditional IVF.

The World Health Organization estimates there are between 120 and 160 million couples struggling with infertility worldwide.

"Nobody thinks that infertil-

ity in developing countries is a problem, but it is an even bigger problem there than in (the West)," WHO reproductive health expert Sheryl Vanderpoel said.

She said more people in developing countries have complications from untreated infections, including sexually spread diseases, than in the West, which can hurt their fertility.

"Making IVF affordable is a public health priority," she said.

Dr. Hassan Sallam, director of the Alexandria Fertility and IVF Center in Egypt, said the cheaper IVF method would be welcomed. He said there is considerable social pressure on young Egyptian couples to have children — and that is compounded by the fact

in rural areas, many newlyweds live with the man's family. "All eyes are on the newlywed couple to see if pregnancy has happened after the first month," he said in an email.

He said couples married for two to three months occasionally come to see him "just to please their in-laws." Although the new IVF strategy is intended for use mainly in developing countries, doctors in rich countries are also interested. "You should not have to be rich just to have IVF," said Dr. Geeta Nargund, medical director for Create Health Clinics, a private fertility center in London. "There are so many people who cannot afford the treatment (in the West) that there would be huge demand if there were something cheaper available."

In many European countries, national health systems pay for several IVF cycles for eligible couples but it can cost more than \$10,000 for those seeking it privately. For many couples, up to three cycles are necessary to create a baby. She has asked Britain's regulatory agency for fertility treatment for permission to test the simpler technique.

Some said the success rates of the cheaper IVF method would likely be lower than those for regular IVF. The simplified method does not include any extensive screening of embryos or any procedures to inject sperm directly into the eggs. "You aren't producing as many eggs with this (cheap) method so the numbers will not be as high," said Ian Cooke, an emeritus professor of reproductive medicine at Sheffield University. Cooke also thought training enough health professionals in developing countries might be an issue.

Still, he said the method was promising. Because doctors were planning to use less potent fertility drugs, he said it was fine to cut back on the regular screening and daily tests used in normal IVF regimens. □

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Kate Gosselin sues ex over book, alleges hacking

MARYCLAIRE DALE

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Former reality TV star Kate Gosselin filed a lawsuit Monday accusing her ex-husband of stealing her hard drive and hacking into her phone and computer to get material for a tell-all book.

Jon Gosselin accessed email, bank accounts and other private information for a book called "Kate Gosselin: How She Fooled the World," according to the federal lawsuit.

The 2012 book was written by Jon Gosselin's friend and business partner, tabloid writer Robert Hoffman, but pulled from the market after two days because the information had been illegally obtained, the lawsuit said.

"Jon violated a federal anti-hacking statute in order to publish salacious, scandalous and defamatory information about Kate," said her lawyer A. Jordan Rushie. "It's damaged her



This 2008 file image released by TLC, shows Jon Gosselin, right, and his wife Kate Gosselin, from the TLC series "Jon & Kate Plus 8," in Hawaii.

reputation."

The couple starred in the TLC show "Jon & Kate plus 8," detailing life with their twins and sextuplets, before they separated in 2009 and later divorced.

The lawsuit accuses Jon Gosselin of identity theft, wiretapping and invasion

of privacy and seeks unspecified damages. A lawyer who once represented Jon Gosselin did not immediately return a message. Hoffman is also named as a defendant. He did not immediately return an email message sent through his website.

Even beyond their acrimonious divorce, the Gosselins have been embroiled in a series of legal problems over the past few years.

— The state investigated whether the children's TV appearances violated child labor laws, amid concerns from her estranged

brother.

— Jon Gosselin threatened to seek primary custody of the children on grounds that his ex-wife's appearances on "Dancing With the Stars" made her an absentee mother, claims her lawyer called reckless.

— Jon Gosselin tangled with the TLC network over outside appearances that allegedly violated his contract for the family-friendly show.

— A Pennsylvania marriage therapist sued Kate Gosselin for the cost of flying to California in 2009 to work with the couple.

— Jon Gosselin's apartment in New York was ransacked by someone who slashed furniture, stole his TV and left a note pinned to his dresser with a butcher knife, according to his lawyer.

— In 2011, Kate Gosselin pleaded guilty to driving 88 mph (141 kph) in a 65 mph (104 kph) zone. She told police she was hurrying home to her children. □

Associated Press

Damon, Panettiere get Environmental Media Awards



In this Aug. 2, 2013 file photo, Matt Damon attends a photo call for "Elysium" at the Four Seasons, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

SANDY COHEN

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Environmental Media Association is honoring Matt Damon and Hayden Panettiere for their dedication to ecological causes.

The organization announced Monday that the

two actors will be honored at its 23rd annual Environmental Media Awards this fall.

Damon will receive the On-going Commitment Award for his work with Water.org, the organization he co-founded that aims to bring safe water and sanitation to

people around the world. The 42-year-old actor says he hopes the award brings attention to Water.org's efforts "to bring clean water to communities around the world and inspire new friends and partners to join the fight."

Panettiere will accept the Futures Award, which recognizes younger entertainers for their potential to be environmental activists. The "Nashville" star is active with the Whaleman Foundation, an oceanic research and conservation group.

The 24-year-old actress said she's excited to talk about her work with the Whaleman Foundation and "using my voice to protect our oceans and their amazing inhabitants."

The prizes will be presented at a ceremony on Oct. 19 at Warner Bros. studios in Burbank, California. □

Linda Ronstadt tells AARP she has Parkinson's



In a Nov. 9, 2011, file photo Linda Ronstadt accepts the Life Time Achievement award at the Latin Recording Academy Lifetime Achievement Award and Trustees Award ceremony in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Linda Ronstadt says she suffers from Parkinson's disease, which has robbed her ability to sing.

The 67-year-old music legend tells AARP Magazine, in an article posted online Friday, that she was diagnosed eight months ago and "can't sing a note." Ronstadt says she began to show symptoms as long as eight years ago, but attributed her inability to sing then to a tick

disease. When her hands began to tremble, Ronstadt said she thought the shaking was the result of a shoulder operation. She said she was "completely shocked" when she finally saw a neurologist and was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. "I wouldn't have suspected that in a million, billion years."

"No one can sing with Parkinson's disease," Ronstadt told AARP music writer Alanna Nash. □

Where Credit Is Due



GAIL COLLINS
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A few months ago, a saleswoman at Macy's tried to wheedle me into renewing my expired store credit card by offering a deep discount on the towels I was buying. So I dug it out of my wallet, where it was nestled between an expired press pass to the Texas state Capitol and an expired library card from Manchester, N.H., and happily handed it over.

She looked at it, puzzled. "But this isn't your name," she said. The card said Daniel Collins. That's my husband, who I believe has never been to Macy's, or bought a towel, in his entire life.

I flashed back to a moment when I was living in Connecticut. I have no idea what year it was, except that it is very possible Richard Nixon was still president. I was in the Macy's in New Haven when a woman with a clipboard came up to me and asked me if I wanted to apply for a credit card.

"Absolutely," I said instantly. She took up her pen. "What's your husband's name?" she asked.

I wish I could tell you that I made a speech about equal rights and headed for the door, but I just let her fill out my application. This was an era when women still needed a male co-signer to get credit. In some places, you needed a husband or father to even get a library card.

Anyway, I was proud of being newly married and dumb about the women's movement. I worked as a reporter in the Connecticut state Capitol, where the male legislators and male lobbyists and male reporters met in a place called the Hawaiian Room to drink. When a female journalist demanded that she be admitted, too, the media were barred completely. The guys in the press room blamed it all on the one woman, who, I am sorry to say, was not me. My only reaction was to wonder why anyone would want to go to the Hawaiian Room, which was in the attic, with steam pipes along the ceiling festooned with limp plastic leis.

I'm telling you all this because on Monday we will celebrate Women's Equality Day, the anniversary of the 19th Amendment and women's right to vote. That was in 1920, and there's no longer anyone around who can tell us what that felt like to be disenfranchised because of your sex.

But there are plenty of people who recall the time when women couldn't get credit in their own name.

Next year, if we're in the mood, we can celebrate the 40th anniversary of the day that Kathryn Kirschbaum, then the mayor of Davenport, Iowa, was told that she could not have a Bank of America card without her husband's signature.

The great thing about Equality Day is that it works in two ways. We can mull both how far we've come and how far we have to go. The one thought feeds the other. The idea of having 50 women in the U.S. Senate, or 250 female CEOs in the Fortune 500 seems less far-reaching if you contemplate the fact that in the 1960s, a spokesman for NASA said "talk of an American spacewoman makes me sick to my stomach." Now, one of the two American astronauts on the International Space Station is a woman, and that is so routine that we're not even aware of her name. (It's Karen Nyberg.)

Monday is also the anniversary of the 1970 women's march for equality in New York, which almost no one expected to be a very big deal. The New York Police Department had only given the marchers permission to use one lane of Fifth Avenue. "Then more people came and more people came and we spilled over, and we took over the entire avenue," recalled Robin Morgan, the feminist author and activist. "That was the moment your heart really sang. People were hanging out windows. I kept yelling: 'Join us!'" And some of them, Morgan said, did just that.

Parades are great. For a long time, the drive for suffrage was seen as a depressing slog of petition-gathering by middle-class clubwomen. Then the parades started, and the movement belonged to everyone.

"We did not eat our little lunches in lobster palaces, but out in the street in front of lobster palaces. We stand for plain living and high thinking, that's it," a marcher told The New York Times during the equality parade in 1912. That comment does seem a tad reverse-snobby, but the mixture of socialites and factory workers, marching for one cause, sent a message. It also sounds as though it was a lot of fun. After the march ended, a woman The Times identified as "Miss Annie S. Peck, the mountain climber," stood on a chair, "waved a Joan of Arc flag, and told her audience that this was the banner that she had planted 21,000 feet above the sea on one of the highest peaks of the Andes."

There don't seem to be a lot of parades planned for Monday, which is probably all for the best. Once a parade becomes an annual institution, it becomes less about a political point and more about the afterparties. But we are going to have one heck of a time in 2020. □



The Common Core And The Common Good



CHARLES M. BLOW
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America, we have a problem. Our educational system is not keeping up with that of many other industrialized countries, even as the job market becomes more global and international competition for jobs becomes steeper.

We have gone from the leader to a laggard.

According to the Broad Foundation, an educational reform group, "American students rank 25th in math, 17th in science and 14th in reading compared to students in 27 industrialized countries."

And we have gone from No. 1 in high school graduation to 22nd among industrialized countries, according to a report last year by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

That same report found that fewer than half of our students finished college. This ranked us 14th among OECD countries, below the OECD average. In 1995 we were among the Top 5.

Some rightly point to the high levels of poverty in our public schools to adjust for our lagging performance, but poverty - and affluence - can't explain all the results away.

As Amanda Ripley, an investigative journalist, explains in her new book, "The Smartest Kids in the World and How They Got That Way," American students are not performing at the same level of their peers internationally.

She writes: "American kids are better off, on average, than the typical child in Japan, New Zealand, or South Korea, yet they knew far less math than those children. Our most privileged teenagers had highly educated parents and attended the richest school in the world, yet they ranked 18th in math compared to their privileged peers around the world, scoring well below affluent kinds in New Zealand, Belgium, France and Korea, among other places. The typical child in Beverly Hills performed below average, compared to all kids in Canada."

A report this month by the company that administers ACT, the college admissions test, found that only a fourth of those tested were ready for college. And that was among motivated students who want to go to college, from all sorts of schools, not just public school students.

Any way you slice it, we're not where we want or need to be. One strategy of changing our direction as a nation is the adoption of Common Core State Standards, meant to teach children the skills they need to be successful in college and careers - skills like critical thinking and deep analysis.

These are things that Americans recognize that our schools need to teach. According to a Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll released Wednesday, 80 percent of Americans strongly agree that schools should teach critical thinking skills, 78 percent agree that they should teach communication skills, 57 percent agree that they should teach students how to collaborate and 51 percent believe that they should help build student's character. The Obama administration strongly supports the Common Core, and the American Federation of Teachers endorses it. The president of the United Federation of Teachers says that most teachers agree it should be implemented. And, according to CoreStandards.org, "45 states, the District of Columbia, four territories and the Department of Defense Education Activities

have adopted the Common Core State Standards."

This seemed like a sure thing. The problem is that, in some states, Common Core testing has been implemented before teachers, or the public for that matter, have been instructed in how to teach students using the new standards.

This means that, when students score poorly on the more rigorous Common Core-based tests, it threatens to cause a backlash among parents, who increasingly see testing as the problem, not the solution.

That Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll also found that most Americans had not heard of the Common Core. Only 22 percent thought increased testing helped school performance, and most rejected the use of student test scores to evaluate teachers.

Because we insist on prioritizing testing over teaching - punishments over preparation - we run the risk of turning Americans off one of the few educational strategies in recent memory that most people say we need.

That's so American. We have to decide as a country - politicians and parents, corporations and communities - that high-performance education is not only valuable to our sense of self, but essential to our future prosperity. Today's students are tomorrow's workers and leaders and innovators and entrepreneurs.

In all the discussions I have with educational leaders and reformers on improving our educational outcomes, there seems to be some level of agreement - though obviously not full agreement - on strategies that work: attracting, supporting and keeping the best teachers and investing in their development; providing "wrap-around" services for poor and struggling students; making schools safe, welcoming, fun places with recess and art and music and nutritious food; and strongly promoting parental engagement. □

New York city Retreat:

Riverside interludes, far from the concrete crowd

VIVIAN YEE

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NEW YORK - They come strolling slowly down Grand Street, around sunset, the young couples and the people accompanied only by their worries, each claiming a boulder or a faded bench as the lights of Manhattan begin to streak the East River. There to the right is the Em-

so outsize it seems almost cruel to mention it: Grand Ferry.

Too narrow for tossing a Frisbee, too rocky for tanning, it is a place for clearing the mind, for getting away from it all in full view of the city.

Rob Stevens, 19, sits at one of the creaking picnic tables, a blue bike splayed nearby. "I came here

up resentful sprays, sometimes just chucking them under the chin. The couples are still, one head resting against another, backs to the rest of the park, nothing between them and the view. They leave behind cigarette butts and Pepsi cans and their initials, scratched into the grit.

Behind them on a bench, Josh Goldstein, 27, and

in Williamsburg don't know about it," he said.

Goldstein relented. He has a couple of friends who got married here, he says.

Grand Ferry has not seen a ferry dock for nearly a century.

And it is not really set in nature, not with the old Domino Sugar Factory on the left and the fenced-in warehouses, whatever

Others come here for hard conversations.

"When I have to talk with my husband, when we have problems, we come to sit in the car," said Daysi Cuevas, 48, in her striped red-and-white sundress and heels, gesturing toward the small clutch of cars that gathers every afternoon. "And I feel better. I think better when I come here." As she talks, she poses her grandchildren - Jaydin, 10, and Jarrelly Cuevas, 3 - against the spiky skyline. Three flashes, and Jarrelly takes off, running aimlessly. Cuevas has come here almost every day since 1993, when she first moved to Metropolitan Avenue.

"That part changed," she said - the people, ever younger, ever whiter, and the rents, ever higher - "but not this park, here. They don't touch anything here."

But like everything else in the neighborhood, Grand Ferry will not stay the way it is. The Domino factory next door is set to be redeveloped into luxury apartments, offices and shops.

No one knows it better than Miguel Vargas, 71, who lived nearby for 53 years. He left five years ago for Bushwick, but comes back when he can, setting up a folding chair under a tree.

He comes to rest his feet. To watch the water. To feel the breeze. To think. About what? "Thinking about my money," he said. "It's a good place to think for everything."

He watched the twin towers fall from here on Sept. 11, 2001, and has seen the new tower rise. The new spire, he thinks, is beautiful. In another year he will be gone, back to Puerto Rico, where he is buying a house. It was a decision he made at Grand Ferry.

There is not much keeping him here, he said: he is divorced, and his two sons live in California. Yet he has gone on. "I just pass my 20s, my 40s, my 50s ..." he said. He trailed off, shrugged, kept sitting. Going nowhere, for now. □



People take in the sunset at Grand Ferry Park as the lights of Manhattan begin to streak the East River in New York. In Williamsburg, Grand Ferry is a place to steal time with the water, separated from the concrete by no more than a jumble of boulders. (Michael Appleton/The New York Times)

pire State Building, adorned in fuchsia tonight. To the left, One World Trade Center, its glitter growing ever higher. In between, the bridges to Brooklyn, garlanding the river with lights like diamond necklaces. At the doorstep to all of this is the fleck of a park that the local residents know as one of the few places amid the soaring condominiums and fenced-off industrial lots of Williamsburg where one can steal time with the water, separated from the concrete by no more than a jumble of boulders. The name for this place is

'cause I didn't want to go home," he said, frowning at a passing ferry. He is fighting with his mother. "You know how it is."

"She thinks I have attitude," he said, the frown deepening. She wants him to get a job; he wants to be a rapper, an artist. He displayed some lyrics he had just typed into his cellphone. "I feel like a dunce," he said, "but at the same time, I know I'm really brilliant."

By the water, couples are perched on the boulders. The river is a few feet away, the waves sometimes slapping the rocks and flinging

Peter Staples, 28, muse on the romantic rhythms of the park, bench philosophers who have seen it all.

"A lot of breakups happen here," Goldstein said. That includes a tough conversation he had with his latest ex, a week after their relationship ended, analyzing what had gone wrong.

"A lot of first dates," Staples countered. That includes several of his own, getting-to-know-you conversations that always seem to meander into the park. He likes to introduce it to people who have never been: "Even people who've been living

they hold, on the right. It is not really quiet, either, not with the drone of nearby machinery pulsing at all times. But it feels quiet.

When Goldstein and Staples have gone, a young Hasidic couple takes their place. They are David and Malky. It is their toddler's first visit to Grand Ferry, but they have been coming, they said, since before he arrived. They smile at each other. The toddler is learning new words. That, there, is a boat. Over there, the three bridges: Williamsburg, Manhattan, Brooklyn. Look up! A helicopter.